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REPORTS

FROM

COMMITTEES:

EIGHT VOLUMES.

—*(8.)*—

STOPPAGE OF WAGES (HOSIERY).

Session

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EIGHTH VOLUME.

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REPORT

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

STOPPAGE OF WAGES (HOSIERY);

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

APPENDIX, AND INDEX.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
25 *July* 1855.

Jovis, 29° die Martii, 1855.

Ordered, THAT a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Stoppage of Wages in the Hosiery Manufacture.

Veneris, 20° die Aprilis, 1855.

Committee nominated of,—

Mr. Packe.	Mr Ingham.
Mr. Wickham.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Biggs.
Sir Joshua Walmsley.	

Ordered, THAT the Committee have power to send for Persons, Papers, and Records.

Ordered, THAT Five be the Quorum of the Committee.

Mercurii, 25° die Julii, 1855.

Ordered, THAT the Committee have power to Report their Observations, together with the Minutes of Evidence taken before them, to The House.

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REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to consider the STOPPAGE OF WAGES in the HOSIERY MANUFACTURE, and who were empowered to report their Observations, together with the Minutes of Evidence taken before them, to The House;——HAVE considered the Matter to them referred, and agreed to the following REPORT:—

THAT the condition of the Framework Knitters, in some branches of the manufacture, and some districts, has long been and continues to be one of great depression.

That this depressed condition, influenced in the first instance by foreign competition, improvement of machinery, and changes of fashion in the articles they have been accustomed to manufacture, leading to the use of an inferior description of hose, which admit of more rapid means of production than can be effected upon the old stocking-frame, is continued and aggravated by peculiar circumstances in the mode of conducting the manufacture and paying the wages.

That the wages actually received by the workmen engaged in this manufacture, differ from the price of their work, as calculated, in the first instance, at the warehouse from which the materials for it are delivered out, and to which it is returned when finished. Such difference being occasioned by deductions for the rent of the frame, and for other charges made by the "middleman."

That the middleman supplies the workman with frames and other machinery, sometimes belonging to himself and sometimes hired of the manufacturer or other owner, and when he settles with the workmen he deducts out of the gross price per dozen of the work performed, first, a sum as rent for the use of the frame; secondly, a sum for winding the yarn, which is a necessary operation, for each workman; a third sum to remunerate himself for the use of the premises where the work is performed, and for the standing room of the frame; and a fourth for his trouble and loss of time in procuring and conveying to the workmen the materials to be manufactured, for his responsibility to the manufacturer for the due return of the materials when manufactured, for superintending the work itself, and for his pains in sorting the goods when made, and in re-delivering them at the warehouse of the manufacturer. The manufacture is carried on, in many instances, at the homes of the workmen, and in places distant from the residence of the manufacturer, with no communication between him and the workmen, except by the intervention of the middlemen.

These items of stoppage have created much dissatisfaction amongst the workmen. They complain of the disproportion between the weekly rent exacted for the frame and the value of the frame itself, and of any profit being derived from the use of the frame, being the tool of a trade, independently of the profit on the sale of the goods, which practice, it is alleged, reduces the earnings of the workman below his just share in the proceeds of the goods, and is a temptation to the manufacturer rather to have many frames in partial work in order to secure the rent for each of them, than to give full work to a smaller number of frames, whereby more hands are retained in the business than the demand for labour will justify; they likewise complain that from these causes their general condition is so depressed that they cannot resist occasional acts of oppression, such as when full rent has been exacted at a time when the workman has, to the knowledge of his employer, been disabled by sickness from making

any use of his frame, and on these grounds they seek the abolition of frame-rents by law.

The practice of exacting full rent in partial work, or where the frames are unavoidably laid idle by reason of the sickness of the workman, is exceptional, and contrary to the practice of the principal manufacturers.

That the stoppage from wages almost universally made under the claim of weekly rent for frames, the property of the employers, manufacturers, or middlemen, bears no fixed proportion to the value of the machine, varying in different districts, and having been increased in Leicestershire, concurrently with an abatement of wages and a diminished selling price of the machine.

That an acknowledged profit is thus obtained to the diminution of wages out of the scanty proceeds of the manufacture, apart from and beyond the ordinary source of manufacturing profit arising from the sale of goods.

That the legitimacy of a profit from rent of machinery beyond the amount necessary to cover the interest of the capital invested in it, together with all expenses required to maintain it in full efficiency, has been defended on the part of some of the large manufacturers.

But Your Committee are of opinion that a profit thus obtained perpetuates the use of imperfect and inferior machinery for the sake of the rent, and thus prevents the adoption of improved and more economical modes of production, attended with less cost, but not admitting of the same amount of profit as distinguished from wages; while as regards the machinery on the old principle (the narrow frames) still required to a certain extent, and not likely in the opinion of some competent judges to be entirely superseded in the manufacture of a certain description of goods, a diminished value ought, in the natural state of things, to bring with it some mitigation of the difficulties of the workmen arising from reduced wages and competition among themselves, in a greater accessibility to the instrument of their work; whereas the contrary is the fact, the hire of such instruments from the employers, at a rate sometimes extravagantly disproportioned to their selling value, being made the condition of employment.

That an indirect profit accruing to the employers of manufacturing labour, beside and beyond the profit arising from the sale of goods, is, as far as Your Committee are aware, recognised in no other manufacture.

That such profit increasing with the number of frames from which it is derived, it becomes an object with those in pursuit of it, in depressed conditions of trade, to spread a given amount of work over the greatest possible number of work-people, not only without regard to efficiency or industry, but with an interest in the opposite qualities; that thus the influence of employers, co-operating with the nature of the occupation, and the helplessness of parents and children, a much larger body of persons are committed to and detained in the manufacture, through successive generations, than can be adequately supported by it, while the gradual working of the ordinary remedy by the withdrawal of superfluous hands is intercepted and frustrated. That the employment of women and children in the stocking frame is objectionable, and ought to be discouraged; that the women would be more properly employed in the subsidiary parts of the manufacture, such as seaming and winding; and that the children being liberated from toil at an early age would have the benefit of an adequate education, which at present they are unable to obtain.

Your Committee are further of opinion, that the profit in question is an abuse, such as was intended by the Legislature to be guarded against in theTruck Act, 1 & 2 Will. 4, c. 37, which forbids the payment of wages otherwise than in the current coin of the realm.

Your Committee therefore recommend a law analogous to the aforesaid Act prohibiting stoppages from wages in the hosiery manufacture.

25 *July* 1855.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

Lunæ, 23° *die Aprilis*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Packe.
Mr. Cobbett.	Sir H. Halford.
Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Biggs.	Sir J. Walmsley.
Mr. Mundy.	Lord John Manners.

Mr. Packe was called to the Chair.

Committee deliberated as to their course of proceeding.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, 1st May, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 1° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
Mr. Cobbett.	Sir J. Walmsley.
Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.
Lord John Manners.	

Mr. *Richard Mitchell*, and Mr. *James Biggs*, examined.

[Adjourned to Friday, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 4° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Ingham.
Sir H. Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Biggs.

Mr. *John Biggs*, and Mr. *William Cummings*, examined.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 8° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Biggs.

Mr. *William Cummings*, Mr. *Thomas Collins*, and Mr. *George Backby*, examined.

[Adjourned to Friday, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 11° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Ingham.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Gardner.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.

Mr. *George Backby*, Mr. *Joseph Elliott*, Mr. *William Butcher*, and Mr. *Isaac Abbott*, examined.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 15° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Wickham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Ingham.
Sir H. Halford.	

Mr. *John Baines*, and Mr. *Robert Walker*, examined.

[Adjourned to Friday, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 18° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir H. Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Cheetham.

Mr. *R. M. Muggridge*, examined.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 22° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Biggs.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Ingham.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Mundy.

Mr. *Thomas Corah*, examined.

[Adjourned to Friday, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 25° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Wickham.

Mr. *Thomas Corah*, Mr. *John Sketchley*, and Mr. *John Ginns*, examined.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, 5th June, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 5° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Sir H. Halford.	Sir J. Walmsley.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Wickham.	Lord John Manners.

Mr. *Charles Billson*, Mr. *George Loveday*, and Mr. *Samuel Hackett*, examined.

[Adjourned to Friday, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 8° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair

Mr. Biggs.	Lord J. Manners.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Cheetham.	

Mr. *Henry Mead*, Mr. *Samuel Brown*, and Mr. *Thomas Winters*, examined.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 12° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Biggs.	Sir J. Walmsley.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Ingham.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Cheetham.

Mr. *Thomas Winters*, Mrs. *Mary Stephens*, and Mr. *William Richmond*, examined.

[Adjourned to Friday, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 15° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Ingham.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Mundy.	

Mr. *Thomas Newstead* and Mr. *Thomas Payne*, examined.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 19° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Ingham.
Sir H. Halford.	

Mr. *Samuel Stone*, Mr. *Robert Ratcliff*, and Mr. *Thomas Turner*, examined.

Committee deliberated.

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Leicestershire case be now closed" (Lord *J. Manners*):—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the question, in order to add the words, "the case of Leicestershire be not considered closed until the evidence of working men from that district be taken in opposition to a legislative interference with the mode in which their wages are at present paid" instead thereof (Mr. *Gardner*):—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 3.	Noes, 2.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Ingham.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	

Main question put:—Committee divided:

Ayes, 2.	Noes, 3.
Mr. Mundy.	Sir H. Halford.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Ingham.
	Mr. Gardner.

Motion made and question, "That the case of Nottingham should be entered upon on Thursday next; that it shall then be considered whether any further witnesses shall be summoned from Leicestershire" (Mr. *Ingham*), put, and agreed to.

[Adjourned to Thursday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Jovis, 21° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. PACKE, in the Chair.

Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Ingham.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.

Committee deliberated.

Motion made and question proposed, "That William Bray and William Townshend be summoned to give evidence before this Committee" (Mr. *Gardner*):—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the question, in order to add the words, "Mr. Turner

Turner having explained how his work is carried on upon the charges system, and that his hands (of whom William Bray and William Townshend are two), without exception, are satisfied with it, and no question having been put implying any doubt as to his statement, the Committee consider it unnecessary to hear further evidence on this uncontested fact" instead thereof (Mr. *Ingham*):—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 3.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Sir H. Halford.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Ingham.
	Mr. Mundy.
	Lord John Manners.

Words added.

Main question, as amended, put:—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 3.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Mundy.	
Lord John Manners.	

Motion made, and question proposed, "That the case for Leicestershire be not closed until the evidence of working men has been taken in opposition to legislative interference with the mode in which their wages are at present paid" (Mr. *Gardiner*):—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word, "That," in order to add the words, "the Nottinghamshire case be now entered upon," instead thereof (Lord *John Manners*):—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 3.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Sir H. Halford.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Ingham.
	Mr. Mundy.
	Lord J. Manners.

Words added.

Main question, as amended, put:—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 3.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Mundy.	
Lord John Manners.	

Mr. *Arthur Morley*, examined.

Committee deliberated.

Motion made, and question, "That Mr. Ingham do take the Chair in the absence of the Chairman," put, and agreed to.

[Adjourned to Friday, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 22° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. INGHAM, in the Chair.

Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cobbett.

Committee deliberated.

Mr. *James R. Allen*, Mr. *Thomas Corah*, Mr. *James Christopher Street*, and Mr. *John Hand*, examined.

[Adjourned to Monday, at Twelve o'clock.

Lunæ, 25° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. INGHAM, in the Chair.

Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Wickham.	

Mr. *Benjamin Elliott*, and Mr. *William Emmerson*, examined.

[Adjourned to Thursday, at Twelve o'clock.

Jovis, 28° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. INGHAM, in the Chair

Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Wickham.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.

Mr. *Thomas Greaves*, and Mr. *Jeremiah Briggs*, examined.

[Adjourned to Tomorrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 29° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. INGHAM, in the Chair.

Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cobbett.

Edward Nicholson, Mrs. *Sarah Bryan*, Mr. *Joseph Freer*, *George Sanderson*, Mr. *William Stafford*, and Mr. *William Bray*, examined.

[Adjourned to Thursday, 5 July, at Twelve o'clock.

Jovis, 5° *die Julii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. INGHAM, in the Chair.

Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord J. Manners.

Mr. *William Mason*, and Mr. *Thomas W. M'Cullum*, examined.

[Adjourned to Thursday, the 19th, at Twelve o'clock, to consider Report.

Jovis, 19° die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. INGHAM, in the Chair.

Mr. Wickham.	Sir J. Walmsley.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir H. Halford.	

DRAFT REPORT (proposed by Sir Henry Halford), read 1°, as follows:

"YOUR Committee, to whom the Subject of Stoppages from Wages in the Hosiery Manufacture has been referred, have had before them the Report of Her Majesty's Commissioner, appointed in 1844, to inquire into the Condition of the Framework Knitters, and the Evidence taken by him, and have themselves examined Witnesses——And Report—

"1. That the condition of the Framework Knitters, in some branches of the manufacture, and some districts, has long been and continues to be one of great depression.

"2. That this depressed condition, influenced in the first instance by changes of fashion in the articles they have been accustomed to manufacture, leading to the use of an inferior description of hose, which admit of more rapid means of production than can be effected upon the old stocking-frame, is continued and aggravated by peculiar circumstances in the mode of conducting the manufacture and paying the wages.

"3. That the wages actually received by the workmen engaged in this manufacture, generally differ very materially from the price of their work, calculated, in the first instance, at the warehouse from which the materials for it are delivered out, and to which it is returned when finished. Such difference being occasioned by stoppages, on various accounts, made by the employers and persons transacting business in the manufacture.

"4. That the manufacture is carried on, in many instances, at the homes of the workmen, and in places distant from the residence of the manufacturer, with no communication between him and the workmen, by the intervention of persons under the designation of middlemen, such persons being neither the paid agents of the manufacturer nor contractors for the work, but having the distribution of employment among the workmen; taking the materials out and returning the finished work to the warehouse on their account, contracting for and receiving their wages, and remunerating themselves for their trouble professedly by a deduction from such wages, either of a fixed weekly amount, or of a sum calculated at so much per dozen on the work actually carried in.

"5. That the workman, as a contracting party with the manufacturer, is entitled to a clear understanding with him as to the particulars of the work to be done and the price to be paid; such understanding being the more necessary in cases where the business is transacted through the intervention of a third party. That such right is recognised in and designed to be secured by an Act of Parliament (8 & 9 Vict., c. 77), by which it was intended to be provided that a written statement to the above effect should be delivered to the workman along with the materials of his work; but that this Act has been frustrated and rendered inoperative from a technical construction put upon its words, the defect having apparently been occasioned by imperfect definition under the anomalous relation of the middleman to the workman and manufacturer respectively.

"6. That the objection made to the Ticket Act, and which occasioned resort to legal advice in resistance of its intended requirement, does not appear, however, to have been founded on denial of the right of the workmen to be informed of the price and particulars of their work, under an agreement to which he must be considered a party, but on account of trouble in the means to be taken to set forth the particulars; such objection appearing the less reasonable when the occasion for the enactment is observed to be chiefly derived from the employment of persons transacting the business of the manufacturer, but receiving their payment from the wages of the workmen.

"7. That under neglect of this Act, the workman has not always security for correct information as to the price of his work, nor against a surreptitious detention of a part of it by the middleman. The want of such security being evinced by the institution of a committee in Nottinghamshire, on behalf of the workmen, to watch over the transactions in which they are engaged, but whose interference does not appear generally to have extended beyond that county.

"8. That a stoppage from wages is almost universally made under the claim of weekly rent for frames, the property of the employers, manufacturers, or middlemen, the amount of such claim bearing no fixed proportion to the value of the machine on account of which it is nominally made, varying in different districts, and having been increased in Leicestershire, concurrently as well with an abatement of wages as with a diminished selling price of the machine, exacted sometimes when full work is not given out, and during the sickness of the workman, rendering him unable to work; its amount in some instances exceeding the earnings of labour.

"9. That an acknowledged profit is thus obtained to the diminution of wages out of the scanty proceeds of the manufacture, apart from and beyond the ordinary source of manufacturing profit arising from the sale of goods.

"10. That the legitimacy of a profit from rent of machinery beyond the amount necessary to cover the interest of the capital invested in it, together with all expenses required to maintain it at that value, has been defended on the part of some of the large manufacturers, while some surprise has been expressed by a moderate partaker in it, at the extent to which it has been carried in some parts of the hosiery districts. In some cases, however, where a small per-centage only has been shown as indicating the amount of such profit, it appears to the Committee that the calculation has been made upon the original cost of the frames, and not upon their actual selling value, whereby the consequences of a depreciation upon an investment made by the manufacturer are thrown upon the workman, and a means of indemnity afforded to the former for an outlay of capital upon machinery more or less prejudiced by new inventions, or under altered circumstances of the trade.

"11. That a profit thus obtained is at variance with sound principles, as perpetuating the use of imperfect and inferior machinery for the sake of the rent, and thus preventing the adoption of improved and more economical modes of production, attended with less cost, but not admitting of the same amount of profit as distinguished from wages; while as regards the machinery on the old principle (the narrow frames) still required to a certain extent, and not likely in the opinion of some competent judges to be entirely superseded in the manufacture of a certain description of goods, a diminished value ought, in the natural state of things, to bring with it some mitigation of the difficulties of the workmen arising from reduced wages and competition among themselves, in a greater accessibility in their favour to the instrument of their work; whereas the contrary is the fact, the hire of such instruments from the employers, at a rate often extravagantly disproportioned to their selling value, being made the condition of employment.

"12. That an indirect profit accruing to the employers of manufacturing labour, beside and beyond the profit arising from the sale of goods, is, as far as your Committee are aware, recognised in no other manufacture, and can only be obtained from the proceeds, by diversion from the share of those proceeds, which would otherwise go to wages.

"13. That in the manufacture in question, the aggregate amount of such indirect profit at the expense of wages is the greater, as obtainable with very limited capital; means and temptation being thus afforded to a much larger number of persons to become partakers of it than are necessary for the proper conduct of the manufacture, and a class of parasitical employers created, with no interest in the profits arising from the sale of goods, but only in such as can be derived from the workmen.

"14. That such profit, increasing with the number of frames from which it is derived, it becomes an object with those in pursuit of it to spread a given amount of work over the greatest possible number of workpeople, not only without regard to efficiency or industry, but with a positive interest in the opposite qualities; that thus the influence of employers, co-operating with the nature of the occupation, and the helplessness of parents and children, a much larger body of persons are committed to and detained in the manufacture, through successive generations, than can be adequately supported by it, while the gradual working of the ordinary remedy by the withdrawal of superfluous hands is intercepted and frustrated, and a state of things produced in this branch of our national society, which may be not inaptly compared to a deceased hypertrophy, with all its attendant weakness, in an organ of the natural body.

"15. Your Committee are further of opinion, that the profit in question, made by advantage taken of the relative position of the employer to the workman, is an abuse, such as was intended by the Legislature to be guarded against in the Truck Act, 4 Will. 4, c. 37, as directed against the payment of wages otherwise than in the current coin of the realm, and contrary to the spirit and intention of that Act.

"16. They observe, that, under the impression that it was contrary also to the letter of that Statute, a case was brought before the Judges of the Court of Queen's Bench in 1844, but that on a literal construction of the Act, and in the absence, as expressly stated in the judgment pronounced on that occasion, of any allegation of extraordinary abuse, such judgment was adverse to the suit of the plaintiff, a framework-knitter.

"17. Your Committee recommend a declaratory law, bringing stoppages from wages in the hosiery manufacture under the prohibitions and penalties of the aforesaid Act.

"18. They are aware of no practical objection brought against this proposal, of sufficient weight to counterbalance the reasons founded on the considerations they have endeavoured to set forth which might be urged in its support. Something has been suggested as if the operation of such an enactment would be attended with increased trouble to the manufacturer by rendering a double account necessary with the workmen, as relating on the one part to the hire of the frame, and on the other to the wages of labour. They cannot consider any argument of this kind worthy to be placed in competition with the necessity of redressing a practical injustice, nor indeed that there are any well-founded reasons for the apprehension of inconvenience. They observe, that the property in the frame obtained by the employer, whether manufacturer or middleman, where the frame is used at the residence of the workman, is rather a monopoly consequent on the profit capable of being made from it, than a necessary condition of the manufacture; that in cases where it might be convenient that such should be the arrangement, it would be easy to calculate wages apart from the use of the frame, as in other cases of frames not found by the employer, including that use, the wages in either case being a sum corresponding with the work actually performed.

The

The rent of the frame always accruing, has been sometimes alleged as a necessary guarantee for the timely working up of the materials committed to the framework-knitter. On reference, however, to 6 & 7 Vict., c. 40, an Act specially relating to the hosiery manufacture, it will be found that such guarantee is there amply provided, while under existing circumstances there is assuredly no corresponding security for moderation and fair dealing on the other side, with a state of things little calculated to produce the mutual confidence and esteem which it is most desirable should be maintained in the mutual relation between master and workman.

"19. Your Committee are not ignorant of a repugnance on several grounds to legislative interference in this relation, but they submit that there is no reason which can be advanced against the proposal they have made to bring stoppages from wages in the manufacture in question within the scope of the Truck Act, which might not be urged with at least equal force against the provisions of that Act already in operation against the payment of wages in goods and provisions instead of money. Nor, indeed, is the relation between masters and workmen in the hosiery manufacture now exempt from legislative interference on the side of the former, as appears from the Act to which allusion has already been made (6 & 7 Vict., c. 40), while, if direct precedent be needed, of legislation made necessary in repression of abuses in the letting out of tackle and implements in another occupation, it will be amply found in the Acts for the benefit of the coal-whippers of the port of London, 6 & 7 Vict., c. 101, and 8 & 9 Vict., c. 36."

Draft Report (proposed by Mr. Gardner), read 1°, as follows:—

"Your Committee, to whom the Subject of Stoppage of Wages (Hosiery) has been referred, have taken the Evidence of many Manufacturers, Middlemen, Framework Knitters, and others connected with the Midland Districts, and have also examined the Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty in 1844 to inquire into the Condition of the Framework Knitters:——Report—

"That considerable distress exists in some of the branches of the Hosiery Trade, carried on in the Midland districts.

"That this distress is more particularly felt by the country hands who work on the coarser gauges in the narrow frames, technically called the wrought-hose branch, and is owing, in the opinion of Your Committee, to the circumstance that the supply of labour in this particular branch is in excess of the demand.

"That many causes have conspired to bring about this unfortunate result, among which the most prominent are changes of fashion, which have led to the use of an inferior description of hose; improved machinery, which is daily encroaching upon the old narrow frames; and foreign competition.

"That the trade is in a transitional state, and that the old frames will be still further displaced by improved machinery. That steam-power is also in the course of introduction, and that it is in evidence that stockings which cost 3*s.* 9*d.* per dozen on the old system, are produced by that agency at 1*s.* 10*d.*

"That the majority of persons employed on the coarser gauges in the old narrow frames are women, children, and men past the prime of life. That the labour of these persons is nearly, if not quite, as effective as that of able-bodied men; and that, under these circumstances, that branch of the trade has naturally ceased to afford an adequate remuneration to the latter.

"That the practice generally adopted in the Hosiery trade, of settling wages on a system of deductions for frame-rents and other charges, has no connexion with the depressed condition of certain branches of that trade. That it exists in Nottinghamshire, where wages are comparatively high, as well as in Hinckley and other villages of Leicestershire, where they are lamentably low. That it appears to have existed from the first, and that it is explained by the peculiar circumstances of the manufacture, which is entirely of a domestic character, so far, at least, as the wrought-hose branch is concerned. That the frames, for the most part the property of manufacturers or middlemen, are scattered about through the villages in the cottages of the workmen, and are thus removed, in a great degree, from the eye of the owner. That the custom of exacting a fixed rent for the use of the frame is adopted by the employer as a security against its being worked to another person, and as an inducement to the journeyman to turn off as much as it is on an average calculated to produce. That it is alleged that the knitters, though frequently working long hours, are not remarkable for constant and regular industry, and are easily diverted to agricultural and other pursuits, especially at those seasons when the demand for goods is the greatest. That, on the other hand, the workmen complain that the stoppages for rent and other charges are open to great abuses, and are a constant source of oppression. The evidence offered to Your Committee on this branch of the subject is very conflicting. By some it is maintained, that the practice of exacting full rent and charges in case of sickness or other disability, and where only partial work is given out, is the general rule of the trade. This again is solemnly denied by the manufacturers and middlemen, and is also contradicted by the personal experience of several respectable workmen. Your Committee are of opinion that public opinion is strongly opposed to the exaction of rent in the event of *bonâ fide* sickness or disability, and that such cases are exceedingly rare. The cases of apparent hardship which have been brought forward, where the whole or the greater part of the earnings appear to be absorbed in rent and charges, have not borne the test of cross-examination, or the evidence of the opposite party. No doubt the practice of giving out short work, or "stinting," as it is commonly called, obtains to some extent in times of depression,

depression, especially among the smaller manufacturers. Supposing the average production of a frame to be three dozen of hose, material for making only half that quantity is given out, and the full rent, of say 1*s.*, being exacted as usual, no doubt the wages of the workman are reduced by 6*d.* on the amount which he actually produces. But Your Committee are of opinion that short work, and a reduction of wages in one form or another, are inevitable in seasons of depression, and that such reduction would probably be carried still further on any other system. At all events, the desire to keep his frames employed is an inducement to the manufacturer to give continuous although partial employment to his workpeople, at seasons when the state of the market would not otherwise justify him in increasing his stock.

"Your Committee find that betwixt the manufacturer and the journeyman there is a class of undertakers or middlemen who carry out the material from the warehouse to the villages, becoming responsible to the manufacturer for the same, take in the manufactured article when completed, and superintend all the processes of the manufacture; that for these services certain additional deductions are made from the workman's wages, called charges; that these charges appear to be nearly uniform, and well understood through the trade; that they are necessary deductions for services rendered, and, in the great majority of instances, a source of mutual advantage to the middleman and journeyman, and an economy of time, labour, and money to the latter in particular.

"That it has been attempted to be shown to Your Committee that large and unusual profits are derived from the rent of frames. No doubt exceptional cases may be found where frames, bought by accident, exceedingly cheap, and let to steady and careful workmen, have yielded very handsome returns; but Your Committee see no reason to believe that investments of capital in this description of machinery are unusually profitable, but rather the reverse. From 7½ to 10 per cent. has been stated as the maximum return on large numbers of frames by manufacturers of character and intelligence. That they are, upon the whole, an unsatisfactory property, is proved by the fact that all the large manufacturers employ, in addition to their own, independent frames, from which they derive no profit, and that all of this class who have been examined before Your Committee have expressed their intention either not to increase or else to diminish their interest in this description of property.

"Your Committee cannot recommend The House to abolish the system of stoppages for rent and charges, as above described, or, in other words, to interfere with the mode in which wages are at present paid in the manufacture of the Midland districts. Apart from the obvious objections to such a course upon sound general principles, there are, in their opinion, special reasons why those principles should not be violated here. Assuming the stoppages in question to be excessive upon some arbitrary standard fixed in the mind of the workman, they operate, to the extent to which they go, simply as a reduction of his wages, which he would certainly resist if it were in his power to do so. But in the present state of the labour market in this district an Act of Parliament, which should simply alter the mode of payment of wages, by enforcing a net system or otherwise, without increasing the demand for labour, would, in the opinion of Your Committee, leave the journeyman more than ever in the power of his employer. The latter, deranged in his business, and exasperated by the interference of the Legislature, would probably have it in his power to indemnify himself by a reduction of wages for more than the deductions which he had previously made from the earnings of the workman, according to the custom of the trade.

"Your Committee are further of opinion, that alterations in the trade arising from improved machinery are tending naturally, and of themselves, to dispense with the stoppage system. Already the practice of paying net wages is introduced by mutual arrangement in some of the large shops or factories in Leicester, which are filled with wide machinery. There is a difference of opinion amongst practical men, and not a perfectly unanimous consent among the workmen themselves, whether this system is the best and the most convenient. Your Committee, as individuals, see no considerable objection to its introduction where the establishment is under the eye of the employer, and he is able to enforce discipline and regular hours. Where steam-power is introduced, as is beginning to be the case, the stoppage system is of course unknown. But with respect to the narrow frames at present scattered through the villages of Leicestershire, it is the general opinion that the profits of this branch of the trade would not admit of their collection in expensive buildings in towns, nor has the experiment ever been tried, to the knowledge of Your Committee, with this class of machinery.

"Your Committee are aware that, though there is some difference of opinion in the evidence of the journeymen themselves upon the subject, a large majority of them look for an improvement in their condition from the abolition by the Legislature of rent and charges. The agitation against the present system proceeds principally from Leicestershire, where the wages in many departments are lamentably low, and excites little interest in Nottinghamshire, where wages are comparatively high. The stoppage system exists in both counties, and it is clear to Your Committee that it has nothing to do with the depression of the one or the comparative prosperity of the other. But it is natural that, under the pressure of low wages, working men should grasp at anything which promises to improve their condition. Most of them, no doubt, are of opinion that on a system of net wages the whole or the greater part of the sums deducted for rent and charges would go into their own pockets, and that their wages would be raised by that amount. The fallacy, however, of attempts to raise wages by Act of Parliament has nowadays become so obvious, that this idea is industriously repudiated on their behalf by the leaders of the agitation against the present system. Your Committee, however, are of opinion that this class of persons have no very clear views as to the extent to which, or if at all, wages will be affected by the alteration which

which they propose, and that they confine themselves to vague declarations, that though wages cannot be raised, they may with advantage be regulated by Act of Parliament. But if after such regulation, which implies a legislative interference with the mode in which a branch of industry is carried on, and a compulsion on the employer to conduct his business on a system which to him, at least, would appear more troublesome and expensive, wages should remain stationary, or, as is probable, be still further reduced, it appears to Your Committee that great disappointment would result, and that The House would be again invited to interfere. What the practical result of such interference would probably be, The House will best be enabled to judge from the evidence of one of the largest manufacturers in Leicester, himself professedly an advocate of legislation, who informed Your Committee (Question 379), that 'of the 30,000 narrow frames, 10,000 probably are in the hands of women, children, and old men; and that on a change of system those 10,000 persons would probably not be employed, and be thrown out of work.' No doubt the artificial withdrawal of one-third of the persons engaged in a particular industry might tend temporarily to raise the wages of the remainder at the expense of the general labour market of the country. It was with some such object of keeping down the supply of labour in particular industries that the old trade guilds and companies were instituted, but Your Committee cannot recommend a return to economical theories which have long been exploded.

"For these reasons Your Committee deprecate any interference on the part of The House with the stoppage of wages, as at present practised in the Midland districts."

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Report proposed by Sir Henry Halford be now read 2°, and considered paragraph by paragraph."—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the question, in order to add the words, "The Committee Report only the Minutes of Evidence taken before them to The House" (Mr. *Wickham*), instead thereof:—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Main question put:—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Report proposed by Sir Henry Halford, read 2°, and considered, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraph 1 read, and agreed to.

Paragraph 2 read:—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the paragraph, in order to add the words, "This depression is more particularly felt by the country hands who work on the coarser gauges in the narrow frames, technically called the wrought-hose branch; and is owing, in the opinion of your Committee, to the circumstance that the supply of labour, in this particular branch, is in excess of the demand. That many causes have conspired to bring about this unfortunate result, among which the most prominent are the changes of fashion, which have led to the use of an inferior description of hose; improved machinery, which is daily encroaching upon the old narrow frames; and foreign competition" (Mr. *Gardner*), instead thereof:—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Paragraph amended, and agreed to.

Motion made and question put, "That the further consideration of the proposed Report be now postponed for the purpose of having the Report proposed by Mr. Gardner, and amendments to be proposed by the Chairman, printed for the use of the Committee" (Mr. *Gardner*):—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Paragraph 3 read, amended, and agreed to.

Paragraph 4 read :—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the paragraph, in order to add the words, "The middleman supplies the workman with frames and other machinery, sometimes belonging to himself and sometimes hired of the manufacturer or other owner, and when he settles with the workman he deducts out of the gross price per dozen of the work performed, first, a sum as rent for the use of the frame; secondly, a sum for winding the yarn, which is a necessary operation, for each workman; and a third sum to remunerate himself for the use of the premises where the work is performed, for the standing room of the frame, for his trouble and loss of time in procuring and conveying to the workmen the materials to be manufactured, for his responsibility to the manufacturer for the due return of the materials when manufactured, for superintending the work itself, and for his pains in sorting the goods when made, and in redelivering them at the warehouse of the manufacturer," instead thereof (*Chairman*) :—Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph," put, and negatived.—Words added.

Another amendment proposed, at the end of the paragraph, as amended, to add the words :—"And that such charges, as proved by the evidence, were ordinarily known by the workman previous to entering upon his employ, and whilst generally uniform throughout the trade, are, in the opinion of Your Committee, a fair remuneration for services rendered by him to the journeyman" (Mr. *Cheetham*) :—Question put, "That those words be there added :"—Committee divided :

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Motion made and question put, "That the Committee do now adjourn" (Mr. *Gardner*) :—Committee divided :

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Paragraph 4, as amended, further considered. Motion made and question put, "That the Committee do now adjourn" (Mr. *Biggs*) :—Committee divided :

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord John Manners
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Paragraph 4, as amended, further considered. Motion made and question put, "That the Committee do now adjourn (Mr. *Gardner*) :"—Committee divided :

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Para. 4, as amended, further considered :—Another amendment proposed at the end of the paragraph, as amended, to add the words, "the manufacture is carried on in many instances at the homes of the workmen, and in places distant from the residence of the manufacturer, with no communication between him and the workmen except by the intervention of the middlemen" (Lord *John Manners*).—Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.—Paragraph, as amended, agreed to.

Proposed to insert the following paragaph in the proposed Report :—"These items of stoppage have created much dissatisfaction amongst the workmen. They complain of the disproportion between the weekly rent exacted for the frame and the value of the frame itself, and of any profit being derived from the use of the frame, being the tool of a trade, independently of the profit on the sale of the goods, which practice, it is alleged, reduces the earnings of the workman below his just share in the proceeds of the goods, and is a temptation to the manufacturer rather to have many frames

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in partial work in order to secure the rent for each of them, than to give full work to a smaller number of frames, whereby more hands are retained in the business than the demand for labour will justify; they likewise complain that from these causes their general condition is so depressed that they cannot resist occasional acts of oppression, such as when full rent has been exacted at a time when the workman has, to the knowledge of his employer, been disabled by sickness from making any use of his frame; and on these grounds they seek the abolition of frame-rents by law" (*Chairman*):—Question put, "That this paragraph be inserted in the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Gardner.	Sir H. Halford.
Mr. Cheetham.	

Proposed to insert the following paragraph in the proposed Report: "The Committee, however, admitting many of the facts on which these complaints are founded, cannot recommend the interference of Parliament" (*Chairman*):—Amendment proposed to the proposed paragraph, to leave out the word "admitting" (Mr. *Biggs*):—Question put, "That the word 'admitting' stand part of the proposed paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 2.	Noes, 7.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Lord John Manners.
	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.
	Mr. Biggs.
	Mr. Gardner.
	Mr. Cheetham.

Question put, "That this paragraph, as amended, be inserted in the propo sed Report:" —Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Proposed to insert the following paragraph: "The practice of exacting full rent in partial work, or where the frames are unavoidably laid idle by reason of the sickness of the workman, is exceptional, and contrary to the practice of the principal manufacturers" (*Chairman*):—Question put, "That this paragraph be inserted in the proposed Report:" —Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Mundy.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Biggs.	Sir H. Halford.
Mr. Gardiner.	Sir J. Walmsley.
Mr. Cheetham.	

Proposed to insert the following paragraph: "The rent yielded by the capital invested, added to the sale returns on the capital employed in the manufacture of goods, does not exceed the average of mercantile profit on the whole capital of the hosiery manufacturer; if therefore he were to forego the rent his profits would sink below the average, when he would either quit the trade, or must reduce the rate of wages, and leave the workmen generally as they are" (*Chairman*):—Question put, "That this paragraph be inserted in the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Proposed to insert the following paragraph: "It is represented moreover by the workmen, that if rents were abolished those frames only would be employed to which full work could be given, and the active workman would produce more goods, and earn a better maintenance, while the manufacturer would save capital by the reduction in the number of his frames; his gross outlay in wages would not be increased, nor the price of goods raised to the consumer. It was admitted, however, that this would occasion great suffering to the discharged workmen, or what they would consider as such, as they would either have to enter the workhouse, which they now recoil from, or have to withdraw to

other employments, which they are now loath to seek" (*Chairman*):—Question, "That this paragraph be inserted in the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Proposed to insert the following paragraph: "The Committee believe that until the supply of labour in the hosiery trade becomes less in advance of the demand than now, no permanent improvement can be effected, and they cannot advise Parliament to interfere, when in all likelihood the immediate result will be to inflict suffering on many members of the class which it is intended to benefit, when such legislation is deprecated generally by the employers, and frequently by the workmen as crippling them in conduct of their common business, and while remedies can be applied gradually and unobnoxiously by the parties themselves" (*Chairman*):—Question put, "That this paragraph be inserted in the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Proposed to insert the following paragraph: "Your Committee are inclined to look forward hopefully to this result. They expect that public reprobation will check such acts of harshness in the exaction of rent during partial work and sickness as have been noticed; that the example of certain leading manufacturers, who have already adopted a system of net wages in certain branches which admit of that system, will be progressively followed, as the success of it is understood; that the creditable desire of the working hosiers to secure education for their children, will qualify their families to seek other employment (their aptitude for which has been proved by their good management of allotments), and that the measures which are in progress to release labour from the ties of parish settlement, together with the facilities of travelling, will prompt many of the working class in the hosiery district to seek employment elsewhere, while the improvements in machinery and in the articles produced, must increase the demand for their wares, and thus there will be established that wholesome adjustment of the supply of labour to the demand which insures competence to the workman" (*Chairman*):—Question put, "That this paragraph be inserted in the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Paragraphs 5, 6, and 7 of proposed Report, read and negatived.

Paragraph 8 read:—Amendment proposed, after the word "That," to add the following words: "It has been attempted to be shown to Your Committee that large and unusual profits are derived from the rent of frames. No doubt exceptional cases may be found where frames, bought by accident, exceedingly cheap, and let to steady and careful workmen, have yielded very handsome returns; but Your Committee see no reason to believe, but rather the reverse, that investments of capital in this description of machinery are unusually profitable. From 7½ to 10 per cent. has been stated as the maximum return on large numbers of frames by manufacturers of character and intelligence. That they are, upon the whole, an unsatisfactory property, is proved by the fact that all the large manufacturers employ, in addition to their own, independent frames, from which they derive no profit, and that all of this class who have been examined before Your Committee have expressed their intention either not to increase or else to diminish their interest in this description of property" (Mr. *Gardner*):—Question put, "That those words be there added:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

[Adjourned to Monday, at Twelve o'clock.

Lunæ, 23° *die Julii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. INGHAM, in the Chair.

Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Wickham.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Cobbett.	

Paragraph 8 further considered:—Amendments made:—Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "no fixed," in line 3, in order to insert the words "a general" (Mr. *Biggs*), instead thereof:—Question put, "That the words 'no fixed' stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Munday.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Amendment proposed, at the end of the paragraph to add the words: "A necessary result, if the fact be as alleged, of the superabundant labour in that district, as stated in evidence before the Committee" (Mr. *Cheetham*):—Question put, "That those words be there added:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Question, "That this paragraph, as amended, stand part of proposed Report," put, and agreed to.

Paragraph 9 read:—Amendment proposed, to leave out the words, "to the diminution of wages," in line 1 (Mr. *Biggs*):—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Question, "That this paragraph stand part of the proposed Report," put, and agreed to.

Paragraph 10 read:—Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "some of," in line 3, in order to insert the word "all" (Mr. *Cheetham*), instead thereof:—Question put, "That the words 'some of' stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Paragraph amended by leaving out from the word "manufacturers," at the end of line 3, to the words "In some" in line 5:—Another amendment proposed, to leave out all the words following to the end of the paragraph (Mr. *Biggs*):—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Biggs.
Sir J. Walmsley.	Mr. Gardner.
	Mr. Cheetham.

Question, "That this paragraph, as amended, stand part of proposed Report;" put, and agreed to.

Paragraph 11 read:—Amendment proposed, after the word, "That," to insert the words: "The frames, for the most part the property of manufacturers or middlemen, are scattered about through the villages in the cottages of the workmen, and are thus removed in a great degree from the eye of the owner. That the custom of exacting a fixed rent for the use of the frame is adopted by the employer as a security against its being worked by another person, as an inducement to the journeyman to turn off as much as it is on an average calculated to produce. That the cases of apparent hardship which have been brought forward, where the whole or the greater part of the earnings appear to be absorbed in rent and charges, have not borne the test of cross-examination or the evidence of the opposite party" (Mr. *Gardner*):—Question put, "That those words be there inserted:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Another amendment proposed, to leave out the words from the word "goods," in line 7, to the word "arising," in line 10 (Mr. *Biggs*):—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Amendments made.

Question put, "That this paragraph, as amended, stand part of the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Paragraph 12 read:—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word, "That," to the word "manufacture," in order to insert the words, "If an indirect profit from the rent of frames does accrue to the employer, beside and beyond the profit from the sale of goods, such profit is taken into his calculation of his costs of production, and, if abolished, would be met by a corresponding reduction of wages, the result to the workman remaining, therefore, the same" (Mr. *Gardner*), instead thereof:—Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Paragraph amended by leaving out from the word "manufacture," in line 3, to the end of the paragraph.

Question, "That this paragraph, as amended, stand part of proposed Report," put, and agreed to.

Paragraph 13 read and negatived.

Paragraph 14 read:—Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "not only," in line 3 (Mr. *Cheetham*):—Question put, "That the words 'not only' stand part the paragraph:—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Amendments made:—Amendment proposed, to add the words, "That the employment of women and children in the stocking frame is objectionable, and ought to be discouraged; that the women would be more properly employed in the subsidiary parts of the manufacture, such as seaming and winding; and that the children, being liberated from toil at an early age, would have the benefit of an adequate education, which at present

present they are unable to obtain" (Mr. *Mundy*), at the end of the paragraph:—Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Another amendment proposed, to add the words, "But this state of things Your Committee are of opinion cannot be brought about by any immediate act of the Legislature, (Mr. *Cheetham*), at the end of the paragraph:—Question put, "That those words be there added:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Question put, "That this paragraph, as amended, stand part of the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Paragraph 15 read and amended:—Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "an abuse," and to insert the words, "the custom of the trade and not" (Mr. *Biggs*):—Question put, "That the words 'an abuse' stand part of the paragraph:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Another amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "realm" to the end of the paragraph (Mr. *Cheetham*):—Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph," put, and negatived.

Question put, "That this paragraph, as amended, stand part of the proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord J. Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Paragraph 16 read:—Question put, "That this paragraph stand part of proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 2.	Noes, 7.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Cobbett.
	Mr. Mundy.
	Lord J. Manners.
	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.
	Mr. Biggs.

Paragraph 17 read:—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "Committee," to the end of the paragraph, in order to add the words, "cannot however recommend a declaratory or other law on the subject of stoppages. Assuming the stoppages in question to be excessive upon some arbitrary standard fixed in the mind of the workman, they operate to the extent to which they go simply as a reduction of his wages, which he would certainly resist if it were in his power to do so. But in the present state of the labour market in this district, an Act of Parliament which should simply alter the mode of payment of wages, by enforcing a net system or otherwise, without increasing the demand for labour, would, in the opinion of Your Committee, leave the journeyman probably more than ever in the power of his employer" (Mr. *Gardner*), instead thereof:—Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph," put, and negatived.

Question put, "That the words 'cannot however recommend a declaratory or other law on the subject of stoppages. Assuming the stoppages in question to be excessive upon some arbitrary standard fixed in the mind of the workman, they operate to the extent to which they go simply as a reduction of his wages, which he would certainly resist if it were in his power to do so. But in the present state of the labour market in this district, an Act of Parliament which should simply alter the mode of payment of wages, by enforcing a net system or otherwise, without increasing the demand for labour, would in the opinion of Your Committee,

Committee, leave the journeyman probably more than ever in the power of his employer," be there added:—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Another amendment proposed after the words, "Your Committee," to add the word "cannot however recommend any legislation in the instance of the grievances, real or supposed, existing in the hosiery manufacture; but while they regret the distress which has been proved to exist, they believe it arises from causes over which legislation has no control, such as progress of machinery, foreign competition, and changes of fashion, and for which legislation cannot provide any possible corrective" (Mr. *Biggs*): Question put, "That those words be there added:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord J. Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Another amendment proposed, after the words, "Your Committee," to add the words, "therefore recommend a law analogous to the aforesaid Act, prohibiting stoppages from wages in the hosiery manufacture" (Lord *John Manners*):—Question put, "That those words be there added:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Paragraph, as amended, read as follows:—"Your Committee, therefore, recommend a law analogous to the aforesaid Act, prohibiting stoppages from wages in the hosiery manufacture:"—Question put, "That this paragraph, as amended, stand part of proposed Report:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Para. 18 and 19 read and negatived.

Motion made and question put, "That the following paragraph be added to the proposed Report: 'That at the same time Your Committee are sensible that the practical difficulty of framing Acts of Parliament, in the supposed interests of the workmen, in such a state of the labour market as has above been indicated, and so as to meet the conditions of a complicated industry, is very great. This, indeed, has already been shown in the history of the hosiery trade, in the case of the 8 & 9 Vict., c. 77, commonly called the 'Ticket Act;' which Act, intended to assist the workman in making his bargain with his employer, was found on all hands to be impracticable from the first, and has become perfectly obsolete and inoperative'" (Mr. *Gardner*):—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Motion made and question put, "That the following paragraph be added to the proposed Report: 'Your Committee cannot avoid drawing attention to that part of the evidence showing the progress making in the application of new and improved machinery, which, whilst affording large wages to those employed upon it, does at the same time tend to throw out of employment and add to the difficulties of those connected with the old and narrow machinery'" (Mr. *Cheetham*):—Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Sir H. Halford.
	Sir J. Walmsley.

Question put, "That this Report, as amended, be the Report to The House:"—Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Biggs.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir J. Walmsley.	

Question, "That the Evidence taken before the Committee be reported," put, and agreed to.

Ordered, To Report.

EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

NAME of WITNESS.	PROFESSION or CONDITION.	From whence Summoned.	Number of Days absent from Home, under Orders of Committee.	Expenses of Journey to London and back.	Allowance during absence from Home.	Total Expenses allowed to Witness.
				£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
William Cummings	Undertaker or Middleman in the Hosiery Trade.	Leicester	5	1 10 –	5 5 –	6 15 –
Thomas Collins	Manufacturer	Leicester	2	2 – –	2 2 –	4 2 –
George Buckby	Framework-knitter	Leicester	9	1 10 –	9 9 –	10 19 –
Joseph Elliott	Framework-knitter	Leicester	9	1 10 –	9 9 –	10 19 –
William Butcher	Manufacturer	Leicester	4	2 1 6	4 4 –	6 5 6
Isaac Abbott	Framework-knitter	Earl Shilton	3	2 5 –	2 5 –	4 10 –
Robert Walker	Manufacturer	Leicester	3	2 – –	3 3 –	5 3 –
John Baines	Manufacturer	Leicester	3	2 – –	3 3 –	5 3 –
R. M. Muggeridge	Commissioner in 1844 to inquire into the condition of Framework-knitters.	Dublin	8	8 8 –	14 – –	22 8 –
Thomas Corah	Manufacturer	Dublin	2	6 – –	2 2 –	8 2 –
John Sketchley	Framework-knitter	Hinckley	5	2 – –	2 10 –	4 10 –
John Ginns	Framework-knitter	Hinckley	7	2 – –	3 10 –	5 10 –
Charles Billson	Manufacturer	Leicester	2	2 12 –	2 2 –	4 14 –
George Loveday	Middleman	Leicester	2	2 – –	2 2 –	4 2 –
Samuel Hackett	Middleman	Leicester	2	2 – –	2 2 –	4 2 –
Henry Mead	Scripture Reader	Hinckley	1	– –	1 1 –	1 1 –
Samuel Brown	Knitter	Leicester	3	1 10 –	3 3 –	4 13 –
Thomas Winters	Secretary to Society for Protection of Industry.	Leicester	– –	1 10 –	– –	1 10 –
Mary Stevens	– – – – –	Leicester	3	2 – –	1 19 –	3 19 –
William Richmond	Framework-knitter	Leicester	6	1 10 –	4 10 –	6 – –
Thomas Newstead	Framework-knitter	Leicester	5	1 15 –	3 15 –	5 10 –
Thomas Payne	Manufacturer	Leicester	3	2 – –	3 3 –	5 3 –
Samuel Stone	Town Clerk	Leicester	2	2 – –	2 2 –	4 2 –
Robert Ratcliffe	Knitter	Leicester	1	2 – –	1 1 –	3 1 –
Thomas Turner	Middleman	Leicester	2	1 18 –	2 2 –	4 – –
Arthur Morley	Manufacturer	Nottingham	4	2 8 –	4 4 –	6 12 –
James R. Allen	Manufacturer	Nottingham	– –	– –	– –	7 13 –
Thomas Corah	Manufacturer	Leicester	– –	2 8 –	– –	2 8 –
James C. Street	Cashier and book-keeper	Nottingham	1	2 8 –	1 1 –	3 9 –
John Heard	Hosier	Nottingham	3	2 8 –	3 3 –	5 11 –
Benjamin Elliott	Middleman	Belper	5	2 – –	5 5 –	7 5 –
William Emmerson	Framework-knitter	Nottingham	3	1 11 6	2 5 –	3 16 6
Thomas Greaves	Worker	Derby	– –	2 – –	1 10 –	3 10 –
Jeremiah Briggs	Solicitor	Derby	2	2 15 –	3 3 –	5 18 –
Edward Nicholson	Framework-knitter	Leicester	4	1 18 –	2 2 –	4 – –
Sarah Bryan	Framework-knitter	Leicester	3	2 – –	3 – –	5 – –
Joseph Freer	Framework-knitter	Leicestershire	3	2 – –	2 5 –	4 5 –
George Sanderson	Framework-knitter	Leicestershire	3	2 – –	2 5 –	4 5 –
William Stafford	Framework-knitter	Leicester	2	2 – –	1 10 –	3 10 –
William Bray	Framework-knitter	Leicestershire	3	2 – –	2 5 –	4 5 –
William Mason	Scripture Reader	Nottingham	3	2 5 –	2 5 –	4 10 –
Thomas W. M'Callum	Manager	Belper	3	2 10 –	3 3 –	5 13 –
					£.	227 14 –

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Martis, 1° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Cobbett.	Lord John Manners.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir Joshua Walmsley.	Mr. Biggs.

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Richard Mitchell, Esq., called in, and Examined.

1. *Chairman.*] I BELIEVE you are extensively engaged in the hosiery manufacture at Leicester?—I am.

2. About what number of frames do you employ?—About seven or eight hundred of the old kind of frames; I also employ a number of frames that go by steam power in the factory.

3. How long have you been in the trade?—Nearly 40 years, or about 40 years.

4. Are materials given out from your warehouse to undertakers or middlemen to employ framework-knitters to execute the work?—Yes.

5. Do you let frames to middlemen to sublet them to journeymen at a weekly rent?—We let them to middlemen, who keep them in their own shops, and charge to the workmen the rents that they pay to us, we presume.

6. Is the middleman responsible to you for the rent, and for the care of the frames, and the due execution of the work?—He is.

7. Can the middleman put what rent he pleases upon the frames without reference to the rent he pays you for them?—I should think not; the rent of the frames is so universally known that I do not think he could charge more than we charge him.

8. Have you any means of knowing whether he does so or not?—I have not.

9. With reference to the work, is it your custom to agree with the middlemen for a specified sum for the manufactured work, according to the quantity of the raw material given out?—It is.

10. Can the middleman make a different agreement with the framework-knitters for the execution of the work?—I should think he can, but I have not the means of stating that as a fact.

11. Is there any check against his doing so?—No, we have no check.

12. Besides the frame rent, are there not other deductions, called shop charges, made by the middlemen from the earnings of the framework-knitters?—Yes, there are.

13. Can you state what those shop charges are?—No, I have no means of knowing.

14. Do you know whether those charges are arbitrary, or are restricted by custom?—I think very much depends upon the person they have to deal with; there may be a general custom, but I think it is often departed from.

15. Are the only proprietors of frames those who are connected with the trade?—No, there are several others.

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16. Are the frames you employ all your own property?—No; I employ many that are not my own.

17. What proportion of the frames you employ are independent frames?—I should think I own six or seven hundred, and we may employ one hundred beyond that.

18. You rent those?—No, those I employ, but I do not rent them.

19. But you employ, you say, a hundred beyond those that are your own?—Yes, for which we do not receive rent; the parties who own them take the rents.

20. Are those the workmen?—No, they are warehousemen, and men that have a little money to lay out, and they purchase frames, which we employ, and they look after the rents themselves.

21. Are they unconnected with the trade?—They are unconnected with it as manufacturers; they are connected with it partly as warehousemen and servants.

22. Is it the custom of the middlemen to hire independent frames in addition to those they receive from the hosiers, and to let them to the framework-knitters?—Frequently; to a considerable extent, I should think.

23. Suppose you have a quantity of frames which you let out, cannot the middleman spread the work over other frames which he has hired in addition to yours?—He may.

24. Could he not, therefore, stint the work which you have given out for a week's employment in your frames, in order that extra frames hired by other persons might have a share in that work?—He has the opportunity of doing that.

25. Is frame rent relied on as a source of profit in addition to the legitimate profit of the hosiery trade?—Too much so, I am afraid.

26. Does not that tend to force the supply of hosiery very much beyond the demand?—It does; and one cause, I think, why there are generally too many goods made is, that the machine pays a large profit.

27. Do not frames injure by not being employed?—They do.

28. It has been said that the inducement to employ the frames causes employment when goods are not wanted, in order to secure the rent; is it your opinion that that is calculated to produce a healthy state of trade?—There is no doubt that goods are frequently made for the sake of employing frames and getting rent; and that is done to a great extent in bad times.

29. In order to secure the employment of frames when trade is slack, is it not customary to give out less than a week's work?—Yes, frequently.

30. Does not that system tend to reduce the wages below the minimum for subsistence?—Yes, inasmuch as the man only earns a part of his usual amount of wages. If he has only half work, the price perhaps is not reduced; but frequently he is charged the same rent as if he had whole work.

31. After deducting the charges, are not his receipts reduced to the minimum or less than the minimum, to subsist upon?—Yes, of course.

32. Does not that tend to demoralise the workmen, by keeping them in idleness during that part of the week when they are not employed?—Yes, poverty and idleness together are sure to have that effect; they both go together under such circumstances.

33. Would it not, in your opinion, be better for a workman, that instead of being artificially employed for no other purpose than that of securing the rent of the frame, he should only be employed when his work is in demand, and that he should take other means of gaining his livelihood when it is not?—Yes, it would be much to the benefit of the workman, and to his employers also.

34. Is it the custom that the exact and full rent of the frame when the framework-knitter is sick or otherwise disabled from working, should be charged?—That is frequently, and I might almost say generally, the case.

35. Would there be great difficulty in conducting the trade without the intervention of middlemen?—I think there would.

36. Might they not be remunerated by the hosier, so as to bring them more under his immediate control?—I do not know that it would bring them more under his control than they are now.

37. Might they not be remunerated by the hosier?—They might be remunerated by giving a certain price for the work. If the middleman had to find all the little expenses incident to the manufacture, he would have to charge it either to the employer or to the workman.

38. If

38. If the middleman makes such shop charges as he pleases, would he not be much more under the immediate control of the hosier if he remunerated him himself?—He is very much under the control of his master now, though he is paid those charges by the men, because if he does not produce the proper kind of work he is discharged altogether.

39. But with reference to the deduction from the wages, would he have the same temptation or means to charge money to the men if he were paid by, and was wholly amenable to, the hosier?—That is rather a difficult question to answer; we do not enter much into the charges; we do not know what they are between the middlemen and the operative.

40. Can you suggest to the Committee any means by which a framework-knitter might receive the wages for which he has contracted without any stoppage for frame rent or shop charges?—If there were no charges made to the workman, I apprehend he would have to work for the middlemen at a lower price than he gets from the manufacturer to pay him for those expenses.

41. But can you suggest to the Committee any means by which a framework knitter might receive the wages for which he has contracted, without any stoppage for frame rent or shop charges?—An arrangement of prices might be made so that it might include those charges.

42. Sir *J. Walmsley*.] By an "arrangement" you mean a reduction?—Yes, an arrangement with the middleman.

43. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Do you mean a reduction?—Yes, that would be a reduction; the supply and the demand would rule the value.

44. Mr. *Cheetham*.] You say that in addition to 700 frames of your own, you employ about 100 independent frames?—Yes.

45. To the extent of those 100 frames, the party providing them finds you additional capital in your business?—No; we do it for the accommodation of the parties who own the frames.

46. And because your business requires the employment of those frames?—Yes.

47. If you did not so employ them, you must expend capital to the amount necessary for the erection of them?—I should either extend my machinery or reduce my business.

48. The latter, if a profit attached to it, you would not do?—No.

49. You have found it beneficial to call in aid the capitalist who owns machinery, to assist you?—No, it is for the accommodation of the parties; it is not because they supply us with capital.

50. They find you the frames?—Yes.

51. And they are the owners of the frames?—Yes.

52. To that extent they aid and assist the hosier in the employment of capital essential to the carrying on of his business?—Yes.

53. Have you any idea what return for his capital the owner of those machines gets?—No, I could not state the per-centage he gets.

54. Is it anything like what rumour has assigned to it, 200 per cent. upon the value of the frame?—The value of the frame may be from 3 *l.* to 5 *l.*; the rent we give is 1 *s.* a week for that frame.

55. Would not that be a sufficient temptation to induce you to become the owner of these 100 independent frames?—It would suit my purpose better to be the owner, but the reason why I am not the owner is, that the parties who own these frames are persons upon whom I want to confer a favour by employing them.

56. Do you think that is a principle that actuates hosiers as men of busines?—No; I am speaking of my own case.

57. You stated in answer to a question from the Chairman, that frames were employed to secure rent?—Yes.

58. Does not their employment even upon that principle tend also to secure the employment of the labourer?—Yes, it does, but he is often employed when he is not wanted, for the purpose of getting the frame rent.

59. Is not that employment of the labourer better than no employment?—I think it very doubtful whether that is so or not. I think that if he had no employment when goods are not wanted, the price of his labour would be more equally maintained than it is.

60. Then, in case goods were not required, you would have him suspend his

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labour altogether?—I think it would be to the interest of all parties that he should do so.

61. He cannot live without some income?—It is a very bare living that he gets under the present system.

62. Must he not then either take one of two courses; either apply to the parish for relief, or offer his labour at less wages?—Or seek some other employment.

63. He must resort to either one or other of those courses?—Yes.

64. And which course would he naturally take?—If he could get any other employment he would be anxious to obtain it rather than go to the parish.

65. Would he prefer another employment, do you think, rather than continue his own?—If he could get employment.

66. Suppose he could not, would he tender his labour at a less price, to induce work to be given to him?—He would.

67. And that would result from not finding him employment in the first instance under the present system?—When trade is bad the price of labour is of course naturally reduced.

68. Is it not better for the workman to take less for his labour and continue in employment, rather than be without employment at all, or accepting parish relief?—I think not.

69. You say that the frame rent is exacted during the sickness of the frame-work-knitter?—Frequently.

70. How would you remedy that evil?—I do not think the evil can be remedied or interfered with without abolishing frame rents altogether; and I think that should be done, because they are so unequally and unfairly levied.

71. How would you abolish frame rents altogether; by Act of Parliament?—Yes.

72. You think it cannot be done by voluntary arrangement?—No; nothing short of an Act of Parliament would do it.

73. In that case the manufacturer must find his machinery?—Yes.

74. Entirely?—Yes.

75. And the servants, warehousmen, and others who you state are now occasionally proprietors of these machines, and who let them out, must cease to be proprietors?—No; that does not follow; they might make arrangements with the manufacturers; it might be the interest of the manufacturers to rent those frames, and not to charge rent for them to the workmen.

76. Still the manufacturer would be paying rent for them?—He would in that case have to pay without charging it.

77. But still rent, as between master and man, you would abolish by Act of Parliament?—Yes.

78. Are there any other points that the workmen complain of besides this question of rent?—There are others which I am not acquainted with.

79. I think you stated that complaints were often caused by the interference of the middlemen?—Yes.

80. And yet you do not see your way to the abolition of this middleman system?—That is a question I cannot enter into; it is the question of rents more particularly that I am prepared to speak on.

81. Is it not the fact that the use of steam machines is increasing in your district?—It is.

82. Those are provided wholly by the master hosiers, are they not?—Yes; at least, I believe that is the case generally.

83. And the workman is paid a net sum for his labour without any deduction being made for the use of his machine?—He is.

84. What prevents your adopting that outside the factory which you do inside the factory?—That is what we are aiming at, and what we wish to do.

85. But you did not come to this House to ask for an Act of Parliament to regulate the interior management of your factory?—No; it is a different sort of machinery that goes by power; we adopt the same principle as they do in spinning factories, that is, finding all materials, and all little expenses, and paying net wages.

86. And why could not that same system be adopted with regard to the looms you hold outside the factory?—That is what we are aiming at.

87. In one case you do it by voluntary arrangement between the workmen and yourselves, and in the other you come and ask the aid of Parliament?—One is carried on by a few individuals, who make their own arrangements, but the other is

is spread all over three counties. You cannot bring the different manufacturers to act on one principle without an Act of Parliament.

88. But that would not prevent an individual from so acting?—He might do so if he pleased; but if others did not act in the same way he could not continue to do so.

89. He must go by the custom of the trade?—Yes.

90. This custom of which you complain has been in existence, has it not, ever since the origin of the trade?—Ever since I have known anything of the history of it.

91. Is the practice of taking rent acted on by the larger hosiers, and do they make the deductions of which you have spoken during sickness and during partial work?—I should say that is very much the case.

92. Is it done by the whole of the hosiers?—There may be exceptions.

93. Are there, as in every other trade, differences in the practice?—Yes; it depends upon the feeling of the parties.

94. But still you are of opinion that no work on the part of a labourer is better than a partial or whole employment at somewhat less wages?—Yes.

95. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Would not that involve a result of this sort, that in the case of boys and old hands and slow hands, they would be dismissed, or not employed at all?—Very likely that would be the case.

96. And a great many frames that are now used would cease to be employed?—If they were wanted they would be employed.

97. There would be much distress, would there not, consequent upon the transition?—It would make a great deal of difference, no doubt.

98. *Chairman.*] Is not the trade carried on a great deal in the villages in the county of Leicester?—Yes.

99. You have been asked whether it would be better they should have some employment from you, or no employment at all; is there no employment that they can receive except that of being employed by the hosiers?—They take a great many other employments when they are not wanted in our trade.

100. Are not many of them employed by farmers, and in agricultural labour?—A great many of them.

101. Then you do not apprehend that, because they were not employed at all by the hosiers, they would of necessity go to the parish?—No; if they could get any employment they would not feel it necessary to go to the parish.

102. Would it not be better for them to be employed in agricultural labour rather than at small wages by the hosiers?—Yes; if they could get six or seven shillings a week at any labour, it would be better than being employed in the frames.

103. Lord *J. Manners.*] I understand you to say that when a man is employed, say for half a week, the rent for the whole week is subtracted from his wages?—It is.

104. Can you give us any idea as to what that would leave a man net wages?—It would leave him a very little; a few shillings a week would be all he would have left.

105. And your opinion is, that that small residue which would be left to him would not be so beneficial for him as the wages which he might earn in some other way during slack time of business?—No; it would not be equal to that.

106. A question was asked you as to the facility of making an arrangement putting an end to frame rents outside the factory, as you are now establishing steam power within your factory?—Yes.

107. What would be the cost of establishing that steam power within your factory, as compared to the price of an ordinary frame?—The kind of work is different from that made in the hand frames, and the machinery is different; it is very expensive machinery, and the mode of working that machinery is expensive, but the quantity produced is much greater than can be produced by the hand.

108. Are you at all apprehensive of the competition of small owners of frames, when you come to establish steam power in your works?—No, not at all.

109. I understand you to say, that the system of frame rents outside the mill is of considerable standing?—Yes, it has prevailed as long as we have known stocking frames, and we have always been subject to that rent, which I think was bad in principle at first.

110. On the one hand you have a security in the cost of establishing the steam power, that you would not have to meet competition from the smaller and poorer

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capitalists, and on the other you would not have to encounter the difficulty of competing with an existing system?—No; we do not fear the competition of those which are carried on by power; there are few competitors of that kind.

111. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have stated that the rent frame is 1*s.* a week?—That is the narrow frame.

112. Is not some part of that continually requiring repair?—There require to be some repairs.

113. Is the profit more than 8*d.* out of every 1*s.*?—Yes, rather more than that.

114. Ninepence?—It must be 9*d.*; but it depends very much on how the workman uses his machine.

115. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you known frames employed as long as 10 years without any repairs?—Yes, sometimes.

116. Mr. *Gardner.*] How is it that gentlemen like you are not anxious to possess more frames if they produce such enormous returns?—We have to consider whether we can keep them employed or not.

117. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that net wages would be preferred by the workmen?—Yes, I think they would.

118. And would they have a tendency to prevent exactions?—I cannot say.

119. Is it not the case that in some instances the workmen have petitioned their employers to return to the old order of things?—I do not know that.

120. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Such a thing has never come to your knowledge?—No.

121. Would a system of net wages be an advantage to a workman who had been fairly dealt with by his employer?—I think so.

122. Would it be an advantage to the manufacturer?—I think it would be an advantage to all parties.

123. Would it have a tendency to raise or depress the workman's wages?—I think the value of his labour would depend upon the demand for it; sometimes wages would be lower and sometimes higher, but the man would know exactly what he was receiving for his labour.

124. Would not a net system have a tendency to create two prices for labour?—It could not create that, because there are always two prices.

125. Would it not create one price for the manufacturer's frame and one for the independent frame?—Perhaps, when labour was much wanted, the independent frame would obtain a much higher rate of wages than the manufacturer's.

126. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do you apprehend that framework-knitters would have much difficulty in obtaining agricultural employment when trade was slack?—There is a difficulty to a great extent.

127. It depends in some measure upon the time of year, I suppose?—Yes.

128. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I suppose the physical condition of the framework-knitters would, in some measure, prevent that?—Yes, in most cases; but there are many stocking makers that occasionally go out during harvest time when their labour is wanted.

129. But generally they are unfitted for laborious employment?—They are not so well fitted for it as a common labouring man is.

130. Sir *H. Halford.*] May it not be considered, with regard to the hosiery manufacture, that it is capable of being divided into two branches; one branch suited to be carried on in factories, and another better suited to be carried on in the houses of the workmen?—Yes.

131. With regard to what are called wrought hose, those are best made, are they not, upon small frames, as a domestic manufacture?—They are.

132. Is there anything in the progress of invention which renders it probable that that domestic manufacture will be superseded?—I think not; all the better kind of goods must, I think, be made by hand machines.

133. And you think that must continue to be the case?—I think so.

134. And that those machines must be employed in the houses of the workmen?—Yes.

135. What do you consider, upon the average, to be the fair selling value of a narrow frame so employed?—It would not be more than four pounds on an average, I should think.

136. And what is the amount of rent demanded for those frames?—The lowest amount of rent is a shilling a week.

137. That is fifty-two shillings a year (supposing it to be employed all the year round)

round) for a frame of the value of four pounds?—Yes, it is fifty shillings; they allow two holiday weeks.

138. Taking the value to be four pounds, is there anything in the nature of things which should render it impossible for a workman to be possessed of a frame of his own?—Yes, he would find it exceedingly difficult when trade was bad to get employment for his own frame.

139. That is, those who have the distribution of employment would not give the materials to be worked by a man who had his own frame?—They would employ their own frames first.

140. For the sake of the rent?—Yes.

141. Are you aware of any instance in which a workman has a frame of his own?—Yes.

142. Are instances of that kind numerous?—I think they are much less numerous than they were a few years ago. I think the poverty of the men and the difficulty of their getting employment has been the cause of their selling them.

143. In fact a workman having a frame of his own, has found that he could not get employment for it?—He has found it very difficult to do so.

144. And is that occasioned by the facility of procuring a considerable rent by stoppage from wages?—Yes.

145. Do you think that if that stoppage from wages were prevented by law, it might not then be very possible that the domestic manufacture of the wrought hose might be carried on by the workmen on frames of their own?—I think, in the present state of things, they would find it very difficult to obtain the means of purchasing frames.

146. That arises from their poverty and depressed condition?—Yes.

147. In the case of a domestic manufacture of this kind, the instrument by which it is carried on not being of a greater value than, as you say, 4 *l.*, might it not be supposed, on a first view of the subject, that the natural condition of that would be that the workman should have his own frame?—If rents were abolished there would be no inducement for him to have his own frame; he would rather take a frame from his employers.

148. But is not the facility of procuring rent an inducement to the employers and the middlemen to get possession of all the frames?—Yes, it is.

149. Might it not be very practicable to carry on the manufacture by means of workmen using frames of their own?—I think manufacturers would always prefer to have their own machinery.

150. Even supposing they did not get a very considerable profit rent from it?—If they got no rent at all I think they would prefer it, if that was the custom of the trade.

151. That is an affair of custom?—Yes; I think then the manufacturer would look to laying a profit on his goods, to pay for the expense of his machinery, instead of charging a rent for it.

152. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understood you to say you had 700 or 800 old frames, and also frames worked by power?—Yes.

153. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have been engaged in the trade for a considerable number of years, I believe?—I have.

154. Are you aware what the frame rent was formerly?—For what we now charge a shilling they used formerly to charge ninepence.

155. And concurrently with that the selling value of the frame has diminished, I think, has it not?—It has.

156. And the rate of wages has decreased, I believe?—Yes.

157. Is it not a very anomalous state of things that, concurrently with a diminished value of the frames and a diminished rate of wages, the rent of the frames should increase?—Yes.

158. How is that to be explained?—It is difficult to explain it; wages have had a downward tendency for many years.

159. Do you consider that there are more frames than are wanted to carry on the amount of manufacture?—I think there are.

160. And that the inducement to continue the employment of these frames is connected with the rent which they produce?—Yes.

161. You are aware of the statement made by the Commissioner, that the amount of rent varies in different places and at different times, and that it is not regulated by the value of the machine or by the amount of work performed by it;

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you are aware of that representation on the part of the Commissioner, are you not?—Yes.

162. Do you consider that that is a just representation?—I do.

163. It has been said, I think, that an exorbitant rent may be considered as exceptional; supposing it to be exceptional, would not the advantage taken by a person demanding a very high rent for a frame be a means by which he would be enabled to undersell the fair manufacturer?—Yes; but I think all rents are exorbitant.

164. In what way would the fair manufacturer be enabled to meet that sort of competition; would it not necessarily be by lowering wages?—Or by reducing his profits.

165. So that, in fact, supposing the exorbitancy of the rent to be exceptional, the effect of that exceptional practice would be a general depression of the trade and a lowering of wages?—Yes.

166. And do you think that that has in point of fact operated to any great extent?—I think it has.

167. Supposing deductions for frame rent were made illegal under the provisions of the Truck Act, or any similar Act, what effect, do you think, would follow on the manufacture, and on the condition of those employed in it?—The consequence would be, that the manufacturer would have to look for his profit to the article he has to sell, and not to the stocking-makers who manufacture it.

168. And would not that be a much more legitimate and wholsome condition of things?—I think so.

169. Is not the present state of things, the power of obtaining high rents by stoppage from wages, altogether anomalous?—It is.

170. The rent is very often an inducement, is it not, to give half work to a number of frames, rather than whole work to a few?—Yes.

171. So that the amount capable of being earned by a person at half work is very small indeed?—Yes.

172. But being such as it is, does it not preclude the party from any claim upon the poor rates; are you aware whether, supposing the party to be at work at all, it is inconsistent with the poor law that he should have any relief?—It is.

173. The consequence of that may be very great poverty and misery, may it not?—Yes.

174. I think you said that you did not at all interfere with respect to the charges made by the middlemen?—Yes, I did.

175. In the ordinary condition of trade, I presume, you give out sufficient materials for the employment of your own frames?—Yes.

176. But supposing the middlemen, to whom those materials are given, have frames of their own also, their practice, I presume, would be to spread your materials over a much greater number of frames than they were designed for?—I have understood that that is the case.

177. And that would be accompanied, of course, by a very great reduction of wages to the parties employed?—It would.

178. It is, in fact, the interest of the middleman to employ as many workmen as possible, in order to do a given quantity of work?—Yes.

179. His profits being derived from the number of frames employed, rather than from the amount of work done?—Yes.

180. Mr. *Gardner*.] I understood you to say that you have seven or eight hundred old frames, and also frames that are worked by power?—Yes.

181. The latter are erected in the factory?—Yes.

182. What system of payment of wages do you adopt with respect to the seven or eight hundred old frames?—We adopt the system of rents.

183. Rents and charges?—There are no other charges that we make.

184. Do you pay net wages in the case of frames erected in the factory?—Yes.

185. What considerations have induced you to adopt those two opposite modes of paying wages?—We are obliged to supply men working in the factories with the means of working by steam, and we have considered it the best principle to go upon.

186. It is necessary, in fact?—It is necessary; we could make charges to them also, but we think the other system most satisfactory to both parties.

187. Why do you not adopt the net system in the case of the old-fashioned frames?—Because

—Because it would be going contrary to the general custom of the trade, and there would be great difficulty in making arrangements.

188. Do you think that an Act of Parliament is more likely to get over that difficulty than the influence of gentlemen like yourself, largely engaged in the business?—As far as frame rents go it would abolish them, and make them illegal.

189. The power of an Act of Parliament might, of course, make the hosiery trade itself illegal, but I want to ask you how you arrive at the conclusion that an Act of Parliament can bring that state of things about which you, largely interested in the business, decline on your own part to adopt; you take the course you consider best for your own interest?—Custom has so established the other rule, that we cannot depart from it; at least, the public would not generally depart from it; it is too much their interest to keep the present system.

190. Do you not think that considerations of convenience would probably introduce that system?—No; I do not find that people are at all disposed to alter the system unless they are compelled to do so.

191. What was the origin of the system of making deductions for rent, do you imagine?—I cannot go back to the origin of it; I do not know.

192. Are there no circumstances connected with the trade that account for that anomaly; I ask you as a gentleman practically concerned in the trade?—No, I cannot say that there are.

193. Has the fact of frames being scattered generally about in villages had any influence of that kind, you think?—No.

194. I understood you to say that rents were frequently or generally exacted in case of sickness or other disabilities?—Frequently.

195. Does not that operate in the reduction of wages?—Yes, it reduces a man's earnings; it reduces his receipts.

196. How do you account for it, that that hardship is frequently submitted to?—It is to be accounted for by custom; it has been the custom of the trade.

197. But the public would not voluntarily submit to hardship like that, simply because it was a custom?—They do it rather than part with the machine; it is often inconvenient to them to move the machines.

198. Do you think that the effect of an Act of Parliament abolishing rents, would be to do away with that reduction?—Yes.

199. And it would have the effect of raising the wages of the operatives, would it not?—I think it would be satisfactory to the workmen, and also I think it would be to the interest of the employers.

200. Some one, of course, must profit by this exaction, must they not?—Yes.

201. Do you think that if the men submit voluntarily to that exaction some means would not be found to oppress them equally, whatever Act of Parliament you might pass?—The present evil would be done away with; what other evils might arise I do not know.

202. What is it that regulates the rate of wages and the relation which subsists between the operative and his employer?—After all we come to the question of supply and demand; that must regulate it ultimately.

203. That is the ultimate regulator of all relations between the employers and the employed?—Yes.

204. I find in the evidence taken before the Commissioner to inquire into the condition of framework-knitters, the following remarks made by a gentleman, a member of this Committee; I want to ask you, as a practical man, whether you agree with them or otherwise: Mr. William Biggs says, "The only effectual way of reducing these charges, if they are excessive, would be by permanently increased demand for the labour of the journeymen, raising them to such an independent position as that they could then dictate more advantageous terms. If their condition is to be permanently improved, the demand for their labour must be permanently increased." I ask you, as a gentleman largely concerned in the trade, whether you agree with that proposition?—Of course it must come to that; the demand for labour must regulate the value of it.

205. I understood you to say at the beginning of your evidence that middlemen did not put arbitrary rents on frames?—I said I could not speak to that as a fact; the rents of frames are so generally known, that I should think they have not the opportunity of doing so.

206. Mr. *Biggs*.] You said a short time ago that the rent charge for the frames used to be ninepence, and that now it is a shilling?—Yes.

207. And that wages are lower than they were?—Yes.

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208. When the rents were ninepence, did not the frames last much longer than they last now; do they not require more frequent repairs now than they did then?—I do not know why they should, except that the men are compelled to do more work.

209. Is not the fact as I state it?—Yes; the more work they do the oftener they will want repairing, and the lower the wages are the more work they are compelled to do; when we charged ninepence a week in my early days, we then gave from 14 *l.* to 16 *l.* for a machine, and for one particular article that I then gave 9 *s.*, I now give 4 *s.* 6 *d.*

210. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have referred, I think, to the principles of supply and demand, as if they were of constant operation with regard to these matters; I want to ask you whether the tendency of this system, by which the profits of the employer are increased in proportion to the number of frames he employs, is not to increase unduly the number of workmen. I will take it in the words, if you please, of one of the petitions: "That by opening a source of gain, proportioned, not to the amount of work required, but to the number of frames and workmen employed, this custom further aggravates the same effect, as by advantage taken of the distresses of parents, and helplessness of young persons, preventing the adjustment of the supply of labour to the legitimate demand for its results:" Do you not think that that effect is produced by the system?—That is, that the quantity of labour increased?

211. Yes; that it being the interest of the employer to multiply the number of frames in order to get the rent, that involves a multiplication of the number of persons employed, and that thereby young persons are induced to commit themselves to the manufacture for the advantage of the rent that is obtained from the number of frames employed?—I think the high price of frames has brought a great deal of machinery into the market that is not wanted, and the low price of labour has produced a great deal more in quantity.

212. But is it not the natural effect of the profit that is made from the number of frames used, that a greater number of persons are employed than are fairly wanted for the supply of the trade?—Yes, I think so.

213. So that the principle of supply and demand has not a fair operation under the present system?—It increases the supply, and there are other things which have interfered with the demand; the fashions, for instance, of the present day.

214. So that the anomalous conditions of the manufacture, in fact, interfere with the just principle?—Yes.

215. In order to give the principle of supply and demand fair operation, this practice should be corrected?—Yes; I think then we should be quite open, and that supply and demand would regulate everything.

216. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are you desirous of adopting the system of net wages yourself?—We have never attempted it.

217. Would you desire to adopt it?—No, under the present system it is difficult; the rents are so various that it would be difficult to adopt net wages; but doing away with frame rents altogether, I think, would place us on a much more satisfactory footing with the workmen.

218. Then your objection arises out of some other charges, and not frame rents?—No, my objection is to the frame rents; I do not enter into other charges.

219. Then do you desire to see an Act of Parliament passed for the abolition of frame rents?—I should like to see that.

220. Do you think there are any serious obstacles in the way of passing an Act of Parliament carrying out that system in the manufacturing districts where frames are employed?—I think the abolition of frame rents is a very simple thing.

221. Do you think it would be satisfactory to the workmen generally?—I think it would.

222. Do you think it would be generally satisfactory or otherwise to the employers themselves?—There is a strong feeling, I think, existing against it in some quarters; but I think it would be to the interest of the manufacturers not to look to frame rents at all.

223. You think it would be beneficial to the manufacturers not to receive frame rent at all?—I think so.

224. How would that apply to independent frames?—Those independent frames that

that are owned by people not in the business are now let to the manufacturers; they would still have the privilege of doing that.

225. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Is there not a considerable change coming over the hosiery trade generally, by the introduction of new machinery?—Yes, a great deal of new machinery has been introduced for certain kinds of work, but that does not much interfere with the manufacture of the old-fashioned stocking.

226. You think it will not interfere much with that?—I think not; at least, as far as I can see.

227. Sir *H. Halford.*] With respect to these independent frames, is it the fact that they are hired by the employers of labour to be sublet to the workmen?—Very much so.

228. There are no instances, I take it, in which a workman hires an independent frame from persons who are not directly connected with the trade?—Yes, there are some instances of that kind.

229. But not very frequent instances?—They are not very numerous I should think.

230. *Chairman.*] I think you have said that sometimes there may be great difficulty in framework-knitters obtaining employment in agricultural labour?—Yes.

231. But that would not be so much the case in the summer, would it?—No; in the summer, of course, there is a great deal of employment; indeed, men are rather scarce now in many of the villages.

232. Is there not an employment which is very general among them in the winter months, that of cultivating the allotment grounds which they have; are there not many of them who have allotments in the villages?—In the spring a great many of them are so employed.

233. I think you said, and I believe it is the fact, that a framework-knitter cannot, if he has the slightest employment, be relieved by the poor law?—I believe not.

234. Then is he not induced to take half a week's work, or less even than that for fear he should lose all employment by his frame being taken from him?—Yes, he will take as much work as he can get, and almost at any price sometimes.

235. He is induced to take a price almost amounting to starvation in order that his frame may not be taken from him?—Yes.

236. Supposing a richer man in the village were to help a framework-knitter to buy his own frame, which, as you have stated, would probably not sell for more than 4 *l.*?—Yes.

237. Supposing some friend were to assist the man in that way, would that benefit him?—I do not think it would improve his position at all.

238. Supposing him to pay 1 *s.* a week, ought it not, in a healthy state of things, to benefit him?—Yes; but the difficulty would be getting employment for it.

239. Then if a neighbour wished to assist a framework-knitter, that is, to push him on and make him rise in society, he would be prevented by that very circumstance?—I think he would.

240. Mr. *Ingham.*] Why should you not give such a person employment?—Because it is the interest of a manufacturer to employ his own machinery where he can charge a rent for it.

241. Then that is looked to as a part of the profits of your business?—Yes.

242. You say you would be glad to see the system abolished; supposing it to be abolished, what substitute would you propose?—Then the manufacturer must increase his per-centage of profits.

243. Do you mean that he must increase his profits by getting his customers to give a larger price for the goods manufactured?—Yes.

244. How can he get them to do that?—If they cannot buy them without paying a larger price for them, they are obliged to give it.

245. Is it not the case that there is a distinction between power-loom profits and hand-loom profits?—The articles that are made in the two ways are quite distinct; the power-loom weaving is a distinct business from the hand-loom weaving.

246. But of course the power-loom product is not at all dependent upon the rent of the frame?—Not at all; we look to the profit upon the power-loom work when we make a charge for the article.

247. Then you do think you could add a price to what you demand from the

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public for the produce of the hand-loom, without being driven out by the products of other countries, or by the power-loom products of your own country?—We should be compelled to lay on a profit.

248. Would the public be compelled to pay it rather than go to other places?—Yes, as far as the Leicester trade is concerned; we have not any foreign competition there.

249. Do you think that the extra price that you would put on would regulate the universal price, or do you think it would operate as an inducement to other countries, where they might avail themselves of the means of profit that you possess now to enter into competition with you?—The per-centage would be so small that it would not make much difference in the charge.

250. Then you would not have to reduce the wages you give to the workmen if they were released from paying frame rent?—I think it is likely it would have that effect at first, but the general rate of wages would depend upon the demand for labour.

251. Do you think that that is understood by the workmen, or that the thing is popular with them, under the idea that they would be receiving the same wages?—I think it is; it would be satisfactory to them to receive the amount of wages they earn net, without any deductions.

252. What is the difficulty in the way of you yourself making the experiment?—There is a difficulty in going to work contrary to the custom of a trade; if I were to begin without charging rent while other people continued to charge rent, we should not be on equal terms in the market.

253. Except you were to reduce your wages?—Yes.

254. Which is what you anticipate?—I think it is very likely it would have that effect at first.

255. You have stated, I think, that you hired looms from other persons, and employed middlemen to let them out, because you wished to favour certain individuals?—It was not exactly that, not to let them out to middlemen.

256. What class of persons did you intend to favour?—It might be middlemen or others; but it does apply particularly to middlemen.

257. The favour then was to the individuals from whom you rented the frames, rather than purchase them?—Yes.

258. What rent do you pay to these parties?—I pay them the same rent that the stocking-maker pays.

259. That is 50 *s.* a year?—Yes.

260. What class of persons are those; are they parties in connexion with your establishment?—Yes.

261. Persons receiving wages from you?—Yes.

262. Then in truth it is another mode of paying wages; they would have a smaller salary if they had not this benefit, would they not?—No, exactly the same; we make no difference in the salary.

263. But it is a kind of reward, is it not, to those who deserve your good opinion?—Yes.

264. And if you did not give them that, I suppose, another person, under the like circumstances, would increase the remuneration to his men?—No, it is from long connexion that they are inclined to favour them; they would not get better wages.

265. You pay them 50 *s.*; that is very much more, is it not, than the real value of the article of which they are possessed?—Yes.

266. You might by a small expenditure become possessed of the frames yourself?—Yes.

267. If instead of paying the rent which is now paid you employed your capital economically in increasing the number of your own frames, making an increase in the salary, that would be the same thing to them, would it not?—Yes; we do it to train them up in saving habits, and to encourage them to create a little property for themselves.

268. Do you think that that encourages them in saving habits more than if you were to pay them good interest for any money they deposited with you?—Yes, I think so; they receive it in addition to their wages.

269. It is, in fact, a mode by which, by the expenditure of your own capital, you wish to requite valuable services?—Yes.

270. You mentioned, in enumerating other stoppages made out of the wages of workmen, shop charges; what is the meaning of that term?—Those are matters which

which I do not enter into; I do not know exactly what the charges are; they are shop charges made by the middleman to his journeyman, and they consist of charges for fire, light, oil, soap, and a variety of other things used by the stocking-makers in the process of manufacture.

271. Is it not the case that the stocking-maker does not work in any shop belonging to the middleman, but that the middleman supplies him with materials in his own house?—Usually he works in the shop of the middleman.

272. When I heard it spoken of as domestic manufacture, I thought the workmen worked perhaps in their own cottages?—Many of them do, but there are large shops where there are 20 or 30 people all congregated together, and one man supplies them all.

273. Then the shop charges are only made by middlemen in those cases in which the workmen work in his apartment?—Yes.

274. Is it the fact, that for frames furnished to a workman who works in his own cottage, there is the same rent required as there is from the man who works at the middleman's loom, in the middleman's house?—Yes, the same price is given; but the shop charges are charges that are made among themselves, and of which we, as manufacturers, know nothing.

275. The consideration for that is the accommodation they receive under the roof of the middleman?—Yes.

276. Lord *J. Manners.*] You were asked what is to prevent a man, when required to pay frame rent during sickness, refusing to do so; do you suppose he is of opinion that the middleman would offer him work again if he were to refuse to pay rent for his frame during sickness?—Are you speaking of men who work under the middleman, or who work directly for the manufacturer?

277. The question was put in a general form; you were asked what there was to prevent a man refusing to pay the rent?—If he refused to pay his rent, the manufacturer perhaps would remove his machine, and he would be inconvenienced, and have to look out for another one.

278. You were asked also what should prevent you from abolishing in your own case this objectionable system of frame rent; is it the case that you feel the same difficulty in running counter to the long established practice of your trade, as was felt by the factory owners in the woollen and cotton districts, in working their mills 10 hours when their neighbours were in the habit of working theirs 12?—Yes; proper regulations could not then be made without an Act of Parliament; with reference to the hours of labour, it was found necessary for the Legislature to interfere.

279. You apprehend, in fact, that the anomalies of which you have spoken in your own trade are so great, and of such long standing, that you despair of removing them except by an Act of Parliament?—Yes, they having been so established by custom, and the evil instead of being at all lessened, keeps on increasing.

280. And therefore you come to the conclusion, that nothing short of an Act of Parliament will remove these evils?—I do.

281. Mr. *Gardner.*] The reason why the workman submits to the exaction of which you complain is, I apprehend, because the supply of labour is greater than the demand, is it not?—Yes; of course, if the demand were greater than the supply, he would not be in the same unfortunate situation.

282. The question for the Committee to decide is, whether an Act of Parliament for the abolition of frame rents would alter the relation between supply and demand which at present exists; do you think it would?—The question of rent is, I think, distinct from the question of supply and demand, or rather I should say that it increases the supply without increasing the demand.

283. But do you think that an Act of Parliament for the abolition of frame rents would so materially increase the demand for labour in relation to the supply, as to raise the operative out of his present depressed state, which compels him to submit to the exaction of which you have spoken?—I think it would diminish the supply, and make the men more independent.

284. Mr. *Biggs.*] Would the manufacturers generally, do you think, let out frames to persons in the country, assuming that rents were abolished by Act of Parliament, without some consideration or equivalent?—I think so. I think we should be glad if the labour was wanted so as to let our machines out.

285. Taking the state of the trade as it is, would not an equivalent be made by a reduction

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a reduction of wages?—I think very likely that might be the operation of it at first.

286. You propose to legislate only for rent?—Yes.

287. Lord *J. Manners.*] When you speak of the reduction of wages in the first instance, do you mean the reduction of the actual gross wages, or the net wages the men now receive?—I think that at first there would be some consideration for doing away with the rent of the machine.

288. Would that exceed the diminution which the wages of the men now suffer from the frame rent and shop charges?—No, I should not think it would be equal to that.

289. When you speak of the diminution of wages, you do not mean the diminution of the net wages?—No, in the gross wages, I think.

290. Mr. *Cobbett.*] So that you think the workman would be upon the whole as well off as he is now?—I think he would be better off and better satisfied; there would be more fair dealing than there is now.

291. You said you had been acquainted with this trade for 40 years?—Yes.

292. Do you see any great difference between the condition of these working people now, and their condition at the time when you first knew them?—A good deal.

293. What is the difference?—They are gradually getting more and more stricken in poverty.

294. The rent of the frames, I think you said, was at the early part of your experience, 9 *d.* a week?—Yes, those frames that are now 1 *s.*

295. Were the frames divided into different classes then?—Yes.

296. What were they?—It depended upon the widths and gauges of the frames.

297. What was the rent of the highest priced frame when you first recollect the trade?—Ninepence and 1 *s.*

298. What would those be now?—I suppose now they are 1 *s.* and 1 *s.* 3 *d.*

299. Then as to the other class of frames?—There were not many wide frames in those days; they are rather a new introduction.

300. When you were first acquainted with the trade, upon what principle were the wages paid?—They were paid upon the principle upon which they are now paid.

301. And what is that?—Charging rents, and the other stoppages, when they were under the hands of a middleman.

302. How do you profess to pay; you give out material, do you not?—Yes; we give out material to work up into stockings, and they are to be brought in at a certain price.

303. Per pair?—Per pair, or per dozen.

304. What is the rate of payment per dozen that you pay them now, as compared with what you did pay formerly?—I was referring a short time ago to one particular article which just came across my mind, for which we formerly paid 9*s.* per dozen, and they are now made at from 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.*

305. When you say "formerly," do you mean 40 years ago?—Yes, from 30 to 40; we never thought at that time of altering the price of labour; it was continued year after year without any expectation that the value of it would change.

306. From what period do you date the principal change in the price of labour?—I should think from perhaps between 20 and 30 years back.

307. Then from that time it has gone on getting gradually worse?—It has been getting worse and worse every year.

308. But concurrently with that there has been an increase in the rent charged for the frames?—Yes.

309. Has there been an increase in the shop charges also since that time?—I am told that there has been, but I cannot speak to it of my own knowledge.

310. You have more than one middleman?—There are many middlemen, but one middleman will take out a quantity of work for a shop.

311. Suppose one middleman takes out from your work enough to employ 100 frames for a week, do you mean to say that that man will spread that work over 150 frames?—It is his interest to do so.

312. Why?—Because he gets that additional number of rents from the frames.

313. He rents 100 frames of you, we will say?—Yes.

314. And

314. And then he rents 50 more of other parties?—Yes.

315. Are we to understand that it is his interest, when he takes work enough for the 100 frames which he has from you, to spread that work over the whole 150 for the week; getting the rent, not only of the 100 frames, but of the 50 also?—Yes.

316. Stinting the work of those men who you expected he would employ?—Yes; but it often happens that he has more frames from his employer than the employer finds it convenient to give him work for, and it is in those cases that the work is spread over a great many frames; we should charge him rent for half those frames if half only were used, and if he can spread the work over double the number of frames the benefit to him is all the greater.

317. Why, could you not put an end to that system yourself, by telling your middleman that he must not do that?—He is not under our eye, and his interest will lead him to do that which it is not quite right he should do.

318. So that though he is to a certain extent your servant, he is not your servant so far as that is concerned; you do not control him in that way?—No, we do not know that he does this; he does it secretly.

319. But there is no doubt about its being done, I suppose?—We are informed that it is done.

320. With regard to the shop charges; can you say whether some middlemen charge more for candles, for instance, than others do?—I cannot speak to that.

321. You say you are employing four or five hundred old frames; those are frames not in the factory?—Yes.

322. And you have employed a certain other number that are in the factory?—Yes.

323. About how many are there in the factory?—Those in the factories are very wide frames; perhaps there are 60 or 70 wide frames.

324. Do you do the same sort of work on both sorts of frames?—No, quite a distinct work.

325. Would the old frames be available for you within the factory?—Not all.

326. Could the same sort of work you do on the 400 frames be done in the factory?—No.

327. Then you could not carry on your present business provided they were within the factory?—I could not.

328. Are inventions with regard to these frames proceeding in such a way that you expect ultimately to see the work all done in factories, or not?—No; I think the narrow frames which make that description of work cannot be got into a factory so as to answer.

329. In the factory you pay the men in the same way as they are paid in the cotton factories?—I do not know how they are paid in the cotton factories; we pay them net wages, and pay them according to the quantity of work they do.

330. What is the condition of the people who work for you in the factories as compared with those who work for you on those 400 frames?—I think that one man in a factory will earn as much as two men, or three of the others.

331. From looking at them, knowing where they live, and so on, what do you say is the condition of the men as contrasted, the one class with the other; are those in the factories much better off in point of clothing, and so on, than the others?—They are better off; but unfortunately it very often happens that the more men earn the more they will spend.

332. You are in favour of an Act of Parliament which should put an end to frame rents?—Yes.

333. Such an Act would operate immediately upon you, inasmuch as it would prevent you from letting your frames to workmen?—No, it would not prevent me from letting my frames.

334. But it would prevent your taking any rent for them?—Yes.

335. Suppose an Act, such as you contemplate and would approve of were passed, what would you do?—Of course we must be governed very much by what other people do; but I should say, the fair way would be to go on without making any difference in the price of the article to the workmen, and charge it upon the goods; that is what I should wish to see done.

336. Mr. *Ingham.*] In the price of what article do you refer to?—The stockings.

337. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Suppose you pay 4*s.* 6*d.* a dozen now, and the Act were

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to come into operation in the beginning of next month; would you go on paying the net wages of 4 *s.* 6 *d.* to your workmen?—I should, unless there were some general system adopted in the trade.

338. Would there, do you suppose, be a meeting of the trade?—No, I do not think there would; I think we should soon know what the feeling of the manufacturers was generally, and I think we should feel inclined to continue the same prices, at least I should, as far as my own feelings are concerned.

339. And to pay net wages?—Yes.

340. What proportion of the goods manufactured by you in the stocking business could be done in the factories, do you think, as compared with that which you think never can be done in the factories?—The articles are so distinct that are made in the factories, and I think they depend so much on foreign demand, that we can hardly tell to what extent that part of the business may be carried.

341. It is only a small proportion now, I believe?—Yes; it bears a very considerable proportion in my trade.

342. *Chairman.*] Would the effect of the abolition of frame rent be, not so much to alter the wages as between the hosier and the workman, as to give no inducement to give out half work, or to give out work, which is now given out, solely to get rent from the frames?—I think the operation of it would be to reduce the supply at first, because many people would be unwilling to go on probably; but I think the demand for labour would soon induce people to set the machinery going again.

343. But there would be no inducement to create an artificial supply for the sake of the rent of the frame?—No, if the market would not allow the manufacturer profit upon his goods he would cease making them.

344. Will you let me call your attention to a petition presented to the House of Commons last year, to which I see your name is affixed, and in which you say that the custom of exacting payment for the hire of frames, and other charges by reductions from wages, * * * * * * from the facility with which such deductions are made, renders the charges arbitrary and uncertain, and in many instances of excessive amount; is that your opinion?—I signed that petition, but did not enter into all those particulars; frame rents are connected with it, and that was my chief motive for signing the petition. I cannot speak positively upon the subject, but it was represented that they were arbitrary.

345. Does your opinion coincide with the statement in the petition, that it gives an unfair advantage to the least scrupulous employers over the more forbearing, and operates to the injury of the workmen?—No doubt of it.

346. Mr. *Mundy.*] You have stated, I think, that frame rents are on the increase?—Yes.

347. Is that lately, or some time ago?—It is of many years' standing.

348. Is the cost price of a frame on the increase also?—No, it is very much diminished.

349. Mr. *Cobbett.*] What cost 15 *l.* formerly, costs now only 4 *l.*?—A frame cost 14 *l.* or 15 *l.* then, and now, I suppose, as good a frame may be bought at from 4 *l.* to 5 *l.*

350. Mr. *Ingham.*] If you abolished the frame rent, how would you propose to recompense those parties who now derive a profit from the rent of the frames?—If I felt disposed to do so, I could pay them a rent for the frames, and let them out to the stocking-makers free. I might do that if the demand for the produce of those frames was sufficient to induce me to do so.

351. Otherwise you would have either to leave a valuable servant unrequited or give him an addition to his salary?—No; salary has nothing to do with it; the salary I give them has nothing to do with the accommodation I render them in employing the machinery; I should not give them a greater salary if they had no machinery.

352. What other course would you take, then, to give them a proof of your approbation of their conduct?—If I did not want their machinery they must dispose of it in the best manner they could, but if there was a demand for those machines it might answer my purpose to give them a rent for them, and employ them. What I want is, that the manufacturers should look to the public for their profit, and not to the stocking-makers.

353. I think you have 800?—I think about 800.

354. It would be a loss, then, of 2,000 *l.* a year to you unless the public were to pay an additional price?—Yes.

355. *Chairman.*]

355. *Chairman.*] Do we understand from you that when the value of a frame was 14*l.*, the rent charged for it was 9*d.* a week?—Yes. *R. Mitchell,*

356. And that now, when the value of it is reduced to 4*l.*, the rent is 1*s*; is that so?—It is 1*s*. 1 May 185

357. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to say, if an Act were passed for the abolition of frame rent you would pay the same wages as you pay now, and give the knitter the use of the frame gratis?—I said I hoped we should do so; that would depend upon the arrangements made between the workmen and the employers.

358. To what extent would the knitters' wages be raised, supposing that hope of yours should turn out to be well founded?—I should think that the expenses are 10 per cent.

359. Have you at all a confident hope that if an Act should be passed for the abolition of frame rents the wages of the knitters would be raised 10 per cent.?—It must depend upon the demand for their labour, but the question of rent has nothing to do with the supply and demand.

360. The question of increase of wages has?—The wages would depend upon that.

361. The wages of the knitter, you said, would be increased by 10 per cent.; at least, you expressed a hope of that kind?—I think the charges amount to 10 per cent.

John Biggs, Esq., called in, and Examined.

362. *Chairman.*] HOW long have you been connected with the hosiery trade?—Between 30 and 40 years. *J. Biggs,* Es

363. Has the firm of which you are a member employed large numbers of men?—Yes, sometimes two, three, or four thousand persons.

364. And do you continue to employ them?—Not so many.

365. In what branches of the trade are you engaged?—We were in all the branches, but the narrow frame branch we have to some extent abandoned.

366. Are you frame owners?—We are.

367. Do you now hold a much smaller number of frames than you once did?—We hold about 10,000 inches of machinery, but perhaps 300 or 400 narrow frames less than we did; we had at one time 500 or 600.

368. Why have you parted with so many frames?—Because it was not to my interest to work them upon my new system (the net system), whilst the old system was in operation against them.

369. Do the men employed in the districts round Leicester earn the same amount of wages as those who are employed in the town?—No; in many cases they do not earn half as much, and sometimes not one third.

370. How do you account for that?—Because they are employed entirely upon the old frames under the old custom, (the rent system), which I conceive to be a cancer in the trade, if I may apply such a term to describe what I mean.

371. What are the deductions which are made in the hosiery trade from the workmen by the middleman, or by the manufacturer?—By the manufacturer, rent, and by the middleman certain charges for superintendence and trouble. But perhaps the Committee will examine middlemen themselves upon this subject, as I do not know much about it.

372. What, in your opinion, is the effect of these deductions upon the wages of the workmen?—I think the effect upon the wages of the workmen is very injurious. I think that the system of rent is wrong in principle; in all probability it has had the effect of retarding the introduction of improved machinery, and has prevented us from meeting successfully foreign competition to the extent which we otherwise might have done. New frames are built for the purpose of production, and are always employed, and are always producing, and the rental was originally assessed upon the understanding that the frame was to be always employed in producing all it could.

373. Do you take rent for frames?—We do not; we have not done so for three years or more.

374. What system do you adopt?—I have looked back for two or three years to see what the result was as to rental, with regard to those frames that were always fully employed in the single or narrow frame branch, as well as in the other, and I have found that the rental, according to the old custom, was equal to 1*s.* 8*d.* in the pound upon the production; consequently I converted the gross wages into

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net wages at 1*s.* 8 *d.* in the pound, which was a just arrangement, and at once I had an equitable system to go on, which has since been carried through, and has been exceedingly satisfactory to all parties ; I do not think I have had one appeal..

[*The Witness delivered in the following Paper*:]

Gross Wages.	Net.	Gross Wages.	Net.	Gross Wages.	Net.
s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
– 3	– 2 ¾	*4 3*	3 10 ¾	*8 3*	7 6 ¾
– 6	– 5 ½	*4 6*	4 1 ½	*8 6*	7 9 ½
– 9	– 8 ¼	*4 9*	4 4 ¼	*8 9*	8 – ¼
1 –	– 11	*5 –*	4 7	*9 –*	8 3
1 3	1 1 ¾	*5 3*	4 9 ¾	*9 3*	8 5 ¾
1 6	1 4 ½	*5 6*	5 – ½	*9 6*	8 8 ½
1 9	1 7 ¼	*5 9*	5 3 ¼	*9 9*	8 11 ¼
2 –	1 10	*6 –*	5 6	*10 –*	9 2
2 3	2 – ¾	*6 3*	5 8 ¾	*10 3*	9 4 ¾
2 6	2 3 ½	*6 6*	5 11 ½	*10 6*	9 7 ½
2 9	2 6 ¼	*6 9*	6 2 ¼	*10 9*	9 10 ¼
3 –	2 9	*7 –*	6 5	*11 –*	10 1
3 3	2 11 ¾	*7 3*	6 7 ¾	*11 3*	10 3 ¾
3 6	3 2 ½	*7 6*	6 10 ½	*11 6*	10 6 ½
3 9	3 5 ¼	*7 9*	7 1 ¼	*11 9*	10 9 ¼
4 0	3 8	*8 –*	7 4	*12 –*	11 –

(The Figures printed in *Italics* were written with Red Ink in the original.)

I will refer the Committee to the evidence taken before the Commissioner in Nottinghamshire. Mr. Hancock, the manager for Brettle & Co., says, in page 260, "I was so vexed with haggling about the amount of rent to be charged to a shop with short supply, that at last I broke through the difficulty by charging a per-centage on the amount of wages." Then he is asked, "How did you fix upon that per-centage?" he says, "I took out the wages and rental of a shop or two when in regular work, during three or four months, and applied the ratio of rent to wages, thus ascertained as the per-centage to be generally charged in these cases. The next question is, "What did it amount to?" He says, "It amounted to 1 *s.* 4 *d.* in the pound ; rather over 1 *s.* 4 *d.* indeed, but I fixed upon that sum as being certainly not unfair to the workman, and so disputes upon this point are now at an end with us." Then he is asked, "How long have you adopted that plan?" He answers, "I cannot say precisely ; it is of several years' standing." That plan is my own plan, except that my ratio is 1 *s.* 8 *d.* in the pound upon worsted Leicestershire frames, and theirs was 1 *s.* 4 *d.* in the pound upon cotton frames.

375. Will you be so good as to explain to the Committee the paper which you just now put in?—That paper is a list of the prices from 3 *d.* to 12 *s.*; the gross prices of wages and labour, at the time the net system was introduced by me. It is converted by 1 *s.* 8 *d.* in the pound (that being found to be an equivalent rental for frames in full work) into net wages, the net wages being in black ink ; and the net wages equitably converted are one-twelfth less than the gross wages.

376. Mr. *Cobbett.*] From what was that conclusion made?—From our own frames ; from frames in full work in each class of machinery, not excepting the narrow frames.

377. *Chairman.*] Is this system of not taking rent satisfactory to the workmen?—Very much so; I have heard no complaint of it, and I have had no appeal ; I understand it is very satisfactory.

378. Is it a source of loss or disadvantage to yourself?—I have prevented it from being a loss by selling the narrow machinery ; for upon this system with the narrow frames, I could not cope with the old custom. This system supposes the business to be conducted on the principle of supply and demand ; but you meet with another principle in the small frames. The system of rental was introduced perhaps 80 or 90 years ago, as soon as the companies were dissolved ; that rental supplied of course a larger interest than could be got by mortgages and other things, and the consequence was that rent superinduced the creation of machines,

machines, and the same principle that introduced them induced the perpetuation of machines. After they were worn out they were perpetuated for the rental. Until the Commissioner came this subject was never thought of by us; we went on upon the old custom and never thought much about the philosophy of it; but when the Commissioner came, and when his volumes came to be read, it was clear that there were two principles at work, and that one of them must be discontinued, if the trade was ever to be raised to the legitimate level of the trade of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and if it was to enable us to meet foreign competition all over the world; and until it is destroyed you will have no difference in the condition of society in the midland and other districts where these manufactures are carried on with the narrow frames. The operation of the rent system as against the net system, is this: some of the wide frames would make in wages 18*s.* or 20*s.* a week, and we have had those that have paid a man 24*s.* a week. This principle of 20*d.* in the pound applies to production, and it applies equally to all; a narrow frame in full work with a very good hand, would produce 12*s.* gross wages. If from that you take 1*s.*, that reduces it to 11*s.*, or 8½ per cent. upon the production. Another workman will do two dozens of work at 4*s.*, and he will have 8*s.* gross wages. If you take 1*s.* from that for rent, that reduces it to 7*s.* or 12½ per cent. upon the production; another workman will only do a dozen and a half, that will come to 6*s.* only; but according to custom (which with the manufacturers seems to be synonymous with justice), 1*s.* would have to be taken from that, which would be 16 per cent. upon the production; another man (and I have an instance of this kind here), will only produce one dozen per week, which is 4*s.* He receives the same gross wages as another. He does not receive so much money, though he does not know why; but in fact, as he pays 1*s.* upon his 4*s.*, leaving him only 3*s.*, his tax is 25 per cent. upon the production; it has been said in the Commissioner's reports, that in some cases rental is taken for nine pairs only; and some of the witnesses say that rent is taken for six pairs. If a man produces only nine pairs, his tax would be 33 per cent. on the production, and if the man who only brought in half a dozen had 1*s.* taken from him, he would only have 1*s.*, therefore his tax would be 50 per cent. upon the production; under these circumstances the two systems could not work together, and the narrow frames must go by the board. I will mention one case which will show the working of the old custom and the net system. I have here a paper (*producing it*) showing the gross wages of William Foulds & Son, in the village of Quorndon, for two frames from the end of June 1852, to the end of May 1853. The two frames were worked by the same two hands, the old man being a very regular man and a very slow man, he and his son producing annually about the same amount. The amount of work produced in the two years, one year on the old custom, before we put the new system into operation, and the other the year immediately after, did not vary more than 5*s.* or 6*s.* in about 20*l.* The gross wages for two frames for the period I have mentioned was 20*l.* 18*s.* 7*d.* The rent of a shilling a week for each frame, received during the same period under the old custom, was 4*l.* 14*s.*, leaving them 16*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.* to receive. The rental there is 22½ per cent. below the gross wages. They worked 11 months afterwards, and their gains were 19*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.* instead of 16*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*

379. For the same quantity of work?—For the same quantity of work, which is 8⅓ per cent. below the gross wages, that being according to my idea, and according to my experience, as tested by two or three years' examination of the different classes of machinery, an equitable rate. The women and children, the old men, the slow hands and the sick would all, as a matter of course, produce different quantities, but all far below that which would be produced by a competent hand with a machine in full employ, and the consequence is, that the tax increases upon them as the quantity of work produced diminishes; but here it being levied upon the production, you have the same price throughout. Suppose, for instance, a man produced three dozens of hose per week, that at 4*s.* per dozen would be 12*s.* A shilling off that would make it 11*s.* If you divide that by three, it gives 3*s.* 8*d.* I contract with John at 3*s.* 8*d.*; by so doing I do him justice; he gets the same upon one system as he gets upon the other. But if I contract with Tom, who does two dozens only, I must contract with him at 3*s.* 6*d.* upon the net system to get the same advantage as upon the old system, and I must contract with the next man at 3*s.* 4*d.*, and so on. Then I say, that under the net system it would be utterly impossible for any man to contract to pay net wages for labour with all those variations in price. Let labour be reduced, if you please, according to the principles of supply and demand, to the

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lowest possible point; but if you do that, do it openly and in the face of day, and then the very stones will rise in mutiny against a variation in wages of this kind. I consider the great evil of the rent system to be this, that it has perpetuated valueless, ancient, and imperfect tools, instead of giving place to new and improved tools. In Lancashire and Yorkshire, no matter what their machinery has cost, as soon as there is an improvement in machinery they adopt the improvement, and throw into the melting-pot the old machines; the consequence is, that they are able to meet competition all over the world; and we, of course, if we all worked upon the principle of obtaining the most perfect productions, should do the same thing. But that is not the case here; profit is sought out of the tool instead of profit upon the manufacture; the profit upon the manufacture is a secondary consideration. This rent system is a dead weight upon the community in the midland counties, and it never can be got rid of until the inducement to perpetuate the old valueless machinery is removed, and that would be removed if the system I recommend were adopted; but so long as there is the difference which now exists between the two systems it never will be adopted. Any Act which you may pass with respect to the net system will be a step in the right direction; but there is no doubt in the world that it will be evaded in a dozen ways. Nothing but the abolition of the system of rent by Act of Parliament can be of any use. The only difficulty is this, that there would be unquestionably a stage of suffering in society; there are, perhaps, 30,000 narrow frames and 10,000 wide frames. Of the 30,000 narrow frames, 10,000 probably would be in the hands of women, children, and old men; and the probability is, that in the change those persons would not be employed, and would be thrown out of work. The error is, that non-employment has been looked upon as a greater evil than employment even at starvation rates. The fact is, that when you look at your union houses and your gaols, you find that 3*s.* 6*d.* a head is the cost of a pauper in the union workhouse of Leicester, and we know that from 3*s.* 9*d.* to 4*s.* is the cost of a felon in the gaols of Leicester; so that you have here a system that sends down one section of the population 15 degrees below the zero of pauperism. When you talk about doing harm by any changes you may make, it is impossible that you can do so; the fact of the case is, that the men employed in this work have only half rations, and their children have no education; whereas, if you put them into a poorhouse, the adults have full rations, and their children have education besides. You do more for your union houses and for your gaols than you do for your free community.

[*The Witness delivered in the following Paper:*]

OLD CUSTOM.								NET SYSTEM.				Ad Valorum Rate of 20 *d.* in the Pound on Old Custom Prices.
Gross Wages of William Foulds and Son, of Quorndon, for two Frames, from the end of June 1852 to the end of May 1853, 11 Months.				Rent, 1 *s.* a Week for each Frame, Received during same Period.			Wages Received by them.				Same Quantity, at Net Wages, of William Foulds and Son, of Quorndon, for two Frames, from the end of June 1853 to the end of May 1854, 11 Months.			
	£.	*s.*	*d.*		£.	*s.*	*d.*		£.	*s.*	*d.*		£.	*s.*	*d.*	
July 31	1	14	–		–	8	–	Paid	1	6	–	Paid	1	11	2	
Sept. 11	2	9	6		–	12	–	„	1	17	6	„	2	5	4½	
Oct. 16	2	2	–		–	10	–	„	1	12	–	„	1	18	6	
„ 30	1	1	–		–	4	–	„	–	17	–	„	–	19	3	
Dec. 4	2	6	–		–	10	–	„	1	16	–	„	2	2	2	
Jan. 1	1	12	–		–	8	–	„	1	4	–	„	1	9	4	
„ 29	1	15	9		–	8	–	„	1	7	9	„	1	12	9½	
Feb. 26	1	18	6		–	8	–	„	1	10	6	„	1	15	3½	
March 26	1	19	11		–	8	–	„	1	11	11	„	1	16	6¾	
April 16	1	4	–		–	6	–	„	–	18	–	„	1	2	–	
May 14	1	17	6		–	8	–	„	1	9	6	„	1	14	4½	
„ 28	–	18	5		–	4	–	„	–	14	5	„	–	16	10½	
	£. 20	18	7		4	14	–		£. 16	4	7		£. 19	3	8	
								which is 22½ per cent. below gross wages.				which is 8½ per cent. below gross wages.				

Gross or Nominal Wages of William Foulds and Son, of Quorndon, for two Frames, from the end of June 1852 to the end of May 1853, 11 Months.		Time. Rent Received during same Period. Custom.	Gross or Nominal Wages of William Foulds and Son, of Quorndon, for same two Frames, from the end of June 1853 to the end of May 1854, 11 Months.		A Penny in the Shilling on Produce. For Use of Frames, Received during the same Period, 1-12th. Equity.	
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
July 31	1 14 –	– 8 –	July 23	1 15 6	1 12 6½	– 2 11½
Sept. 11	2 9 6	– 12 –	Aug. 20	1 9 4	1 6 10½	– 2 5
Oct. 16	2 2 –	– 10 –	Sept. 17	1 10 –	1 7 6	– 2 6
„ 30	1 1 –	– 4 –	Oct. 15	1 14 –	1 11 2	– 2 10
Dec. 4	2 6 –	– 10 –	Nov. 5	1 10 –	1 7 5	– 2 6
Jan. 1	1 12 –	– 8 –	Dec. 3	2 2 –	1 18 6	– 3 6
„ 29	1 15 9	– 8 –	„ 24	1 4 –	1 2 –	– 2 –
Feb. 26	1 18 6	– 8 –	Jan. 14	1 4 9	1 2 8	– 2 1
March 26	1 19 11	– 8 –	Feb. 4	1 6 9	1 4 6	– 2 3
April 16	1 4 –	– 6 –	March 4	1 13 –	1 10 –	– 2 9
May 14	1 17 6	– 8 –	April 1	1 10 3	1 7 6	– 2 6
„ 28	– 18 5	– 4 –	May 6	1 19 5	1 16 7	– 3 3½
			„ 27	1 8 5	1 6 –½	– 2 4½
	£. 20 18 7	4 14 –		£. 20 7 5	18 13 3½	– 1 14 –
		or 22½ per cent.				or 8½ per cent.

380. You have been understood to say, that whether a man does work to the amount of 12*s.*, or to the amount of 2*s.*, he equally has a shilling deducted for the rent of the frame?—So the Commissioner states.

381. And that is your statement also, is it not?—The Commissioner says that that is the case. You have here three volumes, and the evidence of 50 people to that effect; and I do not wish to be examined about anything which is not within my own personal knowledge.

382. I have understood that to be your statement?—No; I merely put as a supposed case that which the Commissioner says is a real case; but I would rather the Commissioner proved it than I. The Commissioner states that rent is taken for any quantity of work; and it is said that rent is taken even for half a dozen pairs of hose. If you can believe that rent is taken in cases of sickness, which the Commissioner states it is, you may well imagine that rent is taken for half a dozen pairs of hose; and if rent is taken for half a dozen pairs of hose, that makes out the principle I have stated to the Committee.

383. Do you believe that a system of making no deduction for rent could be generally carried out for the benefit both of the manufacturers and the workmen?—I believe that if the principle of net wages were carried out it would be to the advantage of both.

384. Do you think it would be desirable to abolish the system of making deductions for imperfect work?—I think that the power of dismissal is a sufficient security for the manufacturer. To place it in the power of people to deduct what they think fit, on any plea or pretext, is an objectionable custom, and of course liable to abuse.

385. Might not a system of deductions, by way of poundage, be agreed upon in lieu of rent and charges?—An example of that kind is carried out by myself, and has been for the last three years; there is not the slightest difficulty in carrying it out, and I believe it gives great satisfaction.

386. But it might be effected, might it not, by force of law?—Yes, by force of law; it is evident that, as it has not been attempted by more than ten parties in three years, it never will become general except by force of law.

387. Would not the deduction of so much in the shilling be a fairer mode of remuneration for rent and charges than the unequal system of paying one uniform rent, without reference to the amount of work done?—No doubt it would.

388. Is not the hosiery trade generally carried out by the middleman, and not directly between the hosier and the framework-knitter?—No; there are 120 manufacturers in Leicestershire, and out of the 120 there would be, perhaps, 40 who would generally employ middlemen, and perhaps from 60 to 80 who would employ the workmen directly.

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389. That would be one-third?—One-third.

390. Do you say that one-third of the manufacturers only employ middlemen?—I may be wrong as to the proportion, but part of them employ middlemen.

391. But the larger manufacturers employ middlemen, do they not?—Yes; because it would be impossible for the manufacturers individually to distribute 600 *l.* or 700 *l.* a week, in the way of wages, to their workmen.

392. What legal connexion is there between the hosier and the workman where middlemen are employed?—There is none; I know of none except the undertaker, where one is employed.

393. Mr. *Cobbett.*] The workman is responsible to the middleman?—Yes; the undertaker makes his contracts with the workman; and he may make them as readily in net as in gross with rentals. There is a case in which a man has 100 frames now which he worked under the gross system; he is an undertaker; he worked under the gross system until about the time I discontinued it; he then changed his system as an undertaker to the net system, and has since then paid his men net wages as an undertaker, and finds not the slightest difficulty in it.

394. Do the middlemen frequently pay a less price to the workmen than they receive from the hosiers after making allowances for the charges?—The Commissioner says so.

395. What is your opinion upon that subject?—I have no personal knowledge on the subject, but the Committee will perhaps allow me to say that I think this is one of the most able reports that was ever made by any Commissioner upon any subject, and the conclusions to which the Commissioner has arrived are, I think, sound and incontrovertible.

396. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you read the statement in Mr. Muggeridge's report in 1845, upon the subject of the frame rents and charges; that "one of the most oppressively felt, as evinced by the weight of evidence on the subject, and one by far the most universally complained of, is the system of frame rents; that is, a weekly deduction which is universally made of the earnings of the workman as rent for the frame in which he works; the evidence both of masters and men is perfectly conclusive and coincident upon one point, namely, that the amount of this deduction is regulated by no fixed rule or principle whatever; that it is not dependent upon the value of the frame, upon the amount of money earned in it, or on the extent of the work made; that it has differed in amount at different times, and now does so at different places; that the youthful learner or apprentice pays the same rent from his scanty earnings as the most expert and skilful workman in the trade from his of fourfold the amount, and that the practice of this deduction or charge has existed for upwards of a century; on the alleged hardship and oppression of the custom the evidence of master and men widely differs"?—I fully agree in that statement; I believe it to be entirely true.

397. Am I then to understand from you that the same rent is charged for an inferior as for a good frame; I am speaking of narrow frames?—Yes.

398. They charge the same rent, do they, whether it is worked by a boy, a female, or an adult male?—Yes.

399. By one who can make half a dozen pairs of hose, or one who can make three or four?—The same rent is charged in each case, 1 *s.*

400. Do you mean that the full weekly frame rent is taken, whether work is given to the persons or not, or however small the quantity of work may be that is so given, or when the person employed is sick or unable to work?—The evidence taken on the Commission proves it.

401. Are there instances in which one man is employed who pays full rent for two frames at the same time?—I have heard of such instances.

402. The man working three days at each, and being obliged to pay full rent for both?—I have heard of such cases.

403. Have you reason to believe that such cases exist?—I have reason to believe that they exist.

404. Under the present system is it your opinion that it is the interest of the manufacturer to employ slow hands who produce the smallest quantity of work, rather than the quicker workman who can produce more, because he obtains rent for a larger number of frames?—It depends upon what branch of the trade he is in; if he is in the narrow frame trade he must either work upon that system, or if he has no taste for it he must decline the trade.

405. Then under the present system is it your opinion that it is the interest of the

the manufacturer to employ slow hands who produce the smallest quantity of work, rather than the quicker workmen who can produce more, because he obtains rent from a larger number of frames?—The practical doctrine is this, to get the greatest possible amount of rent for the least possible amount of produce; that is the principle. With respect to all the other classes of machinery, and all machinery to be introduced in order to give us an advantage over the rest of the world, the other principle is at work; we work in a legitimate way for a profit on production, and supply and demand is the principle that regulates the wages of the day, as a matter of course.

406. That is the case in general trade?—Yes, but it is not applicable to this trade; it cannot be carried out; a man would be ruined who attempted it. It is impossible that a net system can work with those old and valueless machines. Perhaps the Committee will allow me to say that a manufacturer, for whose opinion I have greater respect than I ever had for any other, and who, I believe, understood the trade almost as well as a legislator, because I think he had a philosophic mind, said 30 years ago, "There are but two things that can ever correct the evils of this business; one is, subscribing 30 or 40 thousand pounds, and buying up all the narrow old frames at 1*l.* or 2*l.*, and throwing them out of the trade into the melting pot; and the other alternative is an Act of Parliament."

407. Would not such a state of things as you describe give to the unscrupulous an advantage over the more conscientious?—The conscientious man is paralysed.

408. Have you read the evidence of Mr. Edward Allen, in the same report of Mr. Muggeridge, page 47; he is chairman of the Leicester Board of Guardians?—Yes.

409. He says: "The complaint that the men make to me, and did make during the time I held parochial office (I served the office of guardian for three years, and last year I was chairman of the Board, and of course heard very generally the complaints of all classes of labourers); the stocking-makers particularly made the complaint of excessive rents which they had to pay for their frames, and the injustice of the hosiers charging a full week's frame rent when the frame was employed sometimes only two, and sometimes three or four days out of the six. Then they complained that they did not get so much work to do as they really could get off of the frame, even in that time; and then they complained of the employment of the undertakers." Then he goes on further to say: "I have no hesitation in saying, that it is my opinion that if the men were rid of the charges, that is to say, supposing a man earned his eight shillings or nine shillings, and had his money net, as they have in other branches of employment, that the man would be able to maintain his family without parish assistance." Then he is asked, "Do you believe that those sentiments are entertained by a great number of respectable people, as well as by the operative classes?" and he says, "Unconnected with the hosiery business, certainly." I would ask whether, having read that, you arrive at the same opinion as that which is there expressed by Mr. Allen?—I am speaking to facts; I would rather not prophesy; I should like to see a legitimate system of business, and I should like to see politico-economic principles generally acknowledged; I have no objection to labour being under the operation of those principles of supply and demand. Wages and water, as a matter of course, will always find the lowest level; but I contend that there is a level below the lowest level of the legitimate operation of the politico-economic principle, which is dug by the rent shovel.

410. You have seen that evidence of Mr. Allen's before; do you think it substantially correct?—Will you have the goodness to tell me the point which you wish to have affirmed or denied?

411. The complaint of the men, made to him during his term of office; he says, "The stocking-makers particularly made the complaint of excessive rents which they had to pay for their frames, and the injustice of the hosiers charging a full week's frame rent when the frame was employed sometimes only two, and sometimes three or four days, out of the six; then they complained that they did not get so much work to do as they really could get off the frame even in that time"?—You have it on Mr. Allen's statement; is it necessary that you should have it also on mine? I have faith in Mr. Allen, and would rather not say anything which might look invidious; there is no doubt about its correctness.

412. I have asked you some questions with reference to excessive rents; I will now ask you whether you think that the system of net wages would prevent those

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excessive deductions that are made for rent?—If the system adopted is the net system, there is no rent in the case; that system would entirely do away with it.

413. Do you not think that a system of net wages would prevent excessive charges being made for frame rents; that is, would not the amount upon which the master and men agreed be less than the amount now charged for frame rent?—I think that a net system would entirely destroy the variation in prices.

414. In other words, would persons holding frames be enabled to obtain the same amount of rent for those frames?—If a manufacturer contracting for an article which the supply and demand principle brings down to 3*s.* 8*d.*, could make a contract with one man at 3*s.* 4*d.*, and with another at 3*s.*, he would be perfectly at liberty to do it, but my belief is that variation in price would be destroyed by the introduction of the net system; I do not believe that he could effect it except behind the screen of the rent system. The fact is, that a man must contract at three different prices for the goods with three different parties, according to their degrees of slowness, if he is to have the advantages that he has under the rent system.

415. Consequently, under a system of poundage he would not be able to get so large an amount of rent?—Certainly not.

416. Have some manufacturers adopted the net system in lieu of rent charges?—Yes, some manufacturers and some undertakers.

417. And is that system carried out now with advantage at Leicester?—Yes, it is carried out very satisfactorily.

418. Was it not carried out by Messrs. Brettell?—Yes.

419. In your opinion, would it be possible to work the old and comparatively valueless machines on a system of net wages instead of upon the old system of gross wages and deductions?—Yes, it would be both possible and beneficial, but there is no occasion to shut our eyes to the fact, that one-third of the old machines would be flung away; the children would have to go to the workhouse, and be educated, and the old men would have to fall upon the parish, and would be unemployed; but I contend, that the state of pauperism is 15 per cent. above that of this one section of the population.

420. Would a system of net wages, do you think, be objected to by the manufacturers generally, and if so, why?—Because their principle is a profit upon the rental; if that principle is annihilated they must come upon the legitimate principle; of course they could not contract openly and in the face of day with the workmen at different rates for the same articles; that is not in the nature of things; the men would not submit to it if it were put plainly before them.

421. I understand you to say that the deductions which are now made would not be submitted to were they placed openly before the workmen?—That is my opinion; I think they would not be submitted to to the same extent. Of course the wages would go down in the case of the man who did the full amount of work at his frame, to the lowest point to which politico-economic principles could send them, and the idea of raising wages by Act of Parliament against that principle is perfect folly.

422. Can you give the Committee any illustrations of the injurious effects upon the workmen of the old or the present system?—My belief is that the condition of that large section of the population whose wages are less than the sum given to paupers in parish relief, is superinduced by the excess created by this principle, which has fostered more frames than, but for this principle, would have been in operation; it has perpetuated them without full employment; has thrown them into the hands of women and children, and, in the absence of women and children, has in times of great depression induced the process or practice of stinting, that is, giving only one-half or one-third of the necessary material for employment for the week, and exacting the full rental; and if natural causes are not of themselves sufficient to produce this state of things, other causes may be brought into operation; the cupidity of the employers may be brought in, to force that which natural causes do not produce so extensively, and the same result may be obtained, and what is that result? manufacturing against the principles of political economy, you manufacture, in a market already too full, driblets in order to get a rental; and all these driblets from different brooks, coming at last into one stream, inundate the market already overstocked; the effect of that is detrimental to the whole trade; that system, however, goes on from generation to generation, until at last it is found that it must be altered, and it can only be altered by the abolition of the principle of getting a profit from the tool.

423. What

423. What has been the effect of this system upon the social and moral condition of the working classes of Leicester generally?—It has created a bad feeling between the employers and the employed. It has been a fertile source of dissatisfaction, and it has been petitioned against ever since the year 1778, when the first petition against rents and charges was sent to Parliament. There has been a sort of feeling that this was the cause of the dissatisfaction, but the philosophy of the day has never probed it to the bottom, so as to show the people the great gulph between custom and equity.

424. As respects the outlying districts near Leicester, are the framework-knitters in those districts in as bad a condition as they are in Leicester?—In Leicester they are in a better condition, because there they have 6,000 wide frames and improved machines out of 7,000. Some of my machines cost me from 50*l.* to 60*l.*, or 70*l.* each. Rental is a mere secondary consideration. I have them for production on the legitimate principle.

425. You think that the framework-knitters in districts around Leicester are even in a worse condition than those in Leicester?—There is no doubt of it, because narrow frames would not be worked to any extent in Leicester.

426. Because there is a larger number of narrow frames in those districts?—The narrow frames are, I may say, $\frac{19}{20}$ths of them in the country villages.

427. You having considerable knowledge and experience with regard to the working classes in Leicester, I will ask you what is your opinion as regards their desire for a change such as that which has been proposed; do you think that the working men generally as a body are desirous of such a change?—I think there is no question but that they are. You have had petitions signed by 40,000 or 50,000 of them.

428. The question has been asked you whether in some cases men who have left the old system of frame rents and adopted the system of net wages have not gone back to the old system of rents and charges; are you aware whether that is the case or not?—I am not aware.

429. You are satisfied that it would be beneficial to the workmen, and that the workmen themselves as a body are anxiously desirous to do away with frame rents, and to have the net system substituted for the system now in operation?—There is no doubt of it. In Lancashire and Yorkshire you have no such thing as profit upon a tool; such a thing is never thought of by the large capitalists of the north; it is an exception to be found only in the hosiery manufacture.

430. I have asked you questions hitherto with regard to the workmen; do you believe that it would be for the benefit of the trade generally and of the manufacturers, that such a system should be adopted?—I do.

431. You think they would all benefit by it?—Unquestionably. Every class of society connected with the manufacture would eventually benefit by it.

432. Having considered the whole subject, having been so long connected with the trade, and having a thorough knowledge of it in all its bearings, do you see any objection to legislation on the subject?—I think that the change cannot be effected without legislation, because the difference in the amount of profit as the system is worked by many in the one case as against that in the other, is too great to induce a general acquiescence.

433. Do you think that legislation can be properly applied to this question?—If you have the nerve of a Chatham or a Cromwell it can; but I do not think it can without.

434. What are the difficulties that you see in the way, and that you think it would require the nerve of a Chatham or a Cromwell to remove?—You must prohibit a profit upon the tool. You say you do not like to do that, because you interfere with property. I say there is no parallel between rents of houses and land, and rents of frames. It is a misnomer to call it rent; it is only another term for profit which is got out of the tool, you have no right to call it rent. When it is called rent you get alarmed and will not touch it at all; perhaps there is from 30 to 40 thousand pounds embarked at present by the owners of independent frames; those frames if they are worked fully would require repair every three years. After three years' full work, a frame would come to be what we call a carcass; that is, it would only be worth from 1*l.* to 1*l.* 10*s.* Now, if you so date your Act of Parliament that you do not make it come into operation for two years, the practical operation of it will be, that all the frames will have done their work, and they will be valueless. You do no harm to any-

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body, you carry the thing out equitably, doing no injury to property at all; you change the system without injury to anyone.

435. Have you in your own mind thought what would be the best legislative measure to produce the effect you desire?—A surgeon, when his patient has a cancer in his system, cuts it out by the roots; and I think you should deal with this matter in the same way. If you pass an inefficient law, of course it will be evaded in half a dozen ways. It will be as a great many other statutes are, valueless altogether; and you will have the same inquiries and the same petitions again and again.

436. Can you give to the Committee the outline of such a Bill as you think would be effective?—I think this would be an effective Bill. I would date it forward, on account of the amount of property now embarked in frames; although at the same time I would remind the Committee that when railways were allowed by Parliament to be laid down, the owners of horses were not thought of. I would date it forward, so as not to come into operation for two years. I would say, "That from and after the 1st of July 1857, the custom of taking rents for frames in the framework-knitting manufacture be prohibited." That, I think, is all that would be necessary. Of course a penalty would follow a violation of the Act; but that would be a mere matter of detail. Then, if you are not disposed to do that, but if you should be disposed rather to pass an Act that would be inefficient, and that would be evaded, you might pass this: "That from and after the 1st of July 1855, the custom existing between employers and employed of contracting for gross wages, subject to stoppages, shall cease in the framework-knitting trade, and, in lieu thereof, all future contracts for labour shall be made at net rates, payable in the coin of the realm." Here is another, which is more wordy: "Whereas it has been the custom for a century past, in the framework-knitting manufacture, between employer and employed, to contract for labour at gross rates, and to make deductions therefrom, under the name of rent, which said custom has given rise to divers disputes and grievous dissatisfaction, as expressed, from the year 1778 to 1855 at various times, by petitions to Parliament; and it having been proved, that owing to changes in the position of the manufacture to the improvements that have been made in it, and in the mode of carrying it on, that it is inexpedient for the interests of all engaged in it, and for the well-being, growth, development, and prosperity of the said manufacture, that such old custom should be continued. Be it enacted, that from and after the first day of July next, all employers of labour in the framework-knitting trade shall adopt the principle of contracting in net wages for labour, free from all stoppages under any pretext whatsoever, and shall pay such net wages to their workmen in the coin of the realm." The first of those, I think, would be an effectual cure.

437. That is the one which you yourself would desire to have adopted?—Unquestionably. Suppose I were a millionaire, and were benevolent enough to do it (though it is not the fashion of the day to be genuinely philanthropic, philanthrophy being usually paid for by the public), I could take out of my pocket 50,000*l.*, and save you the trouble of passing an Act of Parliament, by buying up all the old machines, and then the section of the population which is now suffering by receiving less than parish wages would be educated and placed in other occupations, and the whole evil would be cured in 15 years.

438. Lord *J. Manners.*] Would your short Bill include shop charges, or would it merely apply to frame rents?—It would, I conceive, be effectual entirely. Shop charges are matters of contract between the workmen and the undertakers. Many of them work at net rates already; some take a penny, and some twopence in the shilling; of course the undertaker could not oppress the workmen if rent were annihilated, because you take the machine out of his hands. You take the lever away from him.

439. Sir *H. Halford.*] I think you were a petitioner in favour of the Bill which I had the honour to introduce last session?—I signed the petition after Mr. Mitchell.

440. What is your opinion as to the effect which would have been produced by that Bill; do you think that if that Bill were to pass it would be effectual for this purpose?—I have not a copy of it; but I do not think that anything would be effectual except such a Bill as I have suggested.

441. You observe that that Bill (*handing a copy of it to the Witness*) contemplates that evil arises from the facility of recovering these rents by stoppage from wages?—I thought this Bill was dead.

442-3. The

442–3. I suppose it might be revived, although it is dead for a time?—I think you had better create than revive.

444. That Bill is merely an extension of a Truck Act to the practice of frame rents; it has the advantage of being founded on precedent, it is not a new scheme in legislation?—I think that public benefactors should consider public interests alone, and should throw precedents to the winds.

445. But how do you think it would be evaded?—Because it does not abolish the custom of taking a profit upon the machine; it says that the wages should be so paid, and that the contracts should be so made. Supposing an employer were disposed to evade the Act, he would have nothing to do but to place a clerk either in another room, or at the end of the counter in the same room; and then each man would march up to him after he had received his money, and pay his frame rent.

446. Does not the evil arise from the facility of obtaining these rents by stoppage from wages?—Yes: but if rents continued the employer would have a clerk at another desk, and the workmen would go and hand their rent over to him; he looking at the book and taking care that they were not employed unless they did hand over their rents. If frame rents were illegal, in any form at all, that could not be done, but unless they are made illegal, any legislation with regard to them would be set at defiance; it would only be nominally carried out; the manufacturer would pay his workmen net wages over the counter, and then the workman would go and pay his frame rent at another place.

447. Does not the same reasoning apply to the payment of wages in goods instead of money; is not the Truck Act capable of evasion in the same way?—The ordinary truck system was to get a profit out of goods, as this system is to get a profit out of the tool.

448. But the two cases are analogous?—Yes, no doubt they are; if you do not abolish altogether the system of allowing profit to be made of tools in the shape of what is misnamed rental, that profit will of course be taken; the machines may be placed in a third hand, and it may be stipulated that they shall be taken from a certain party; there may be collusion and evasion; it is true that the Act is literally carried out by your paying 3 *s.* 6 *d.* if you contract to pay that sum; but practically you do not carry it out; you make it a dead letter.

449. What reason is there for supposing that exorbitant rents would be obtained if there were not the facility for obtaining them by the power which exists of stopping them out of the wages paid to the workman?—If you did not abolish altogether frame rents, they would be placed, in the hands of a third person, there is not any doubt about that.

450. There were some years ago, were there not, employers in the hosiery trade who kept shops?—Yes.

451. There was a society, I think, established to repress that practice, and some prosecutions, I believe, were instituted?—I think so.

452. That was found effectual, was it not, in putting a stop to the practice; the practice does not prevail now?—I should think not to any great extent, I have not heard of it.

453. The law, as applied to that practice, has been found to be effectual in putting a stop to it?—That may be so, but this is not a parallel case; nothing but an Act of the Legislature can ever stop the existing practice; you might as well attempt to prohibit a man from picking up nuggets as attempt to put a stop to the existing practice by anything short of an Act of Parliament.

454. Your system is that which is called the poundage system?—No, mine is a net system, converted from gross wages into net, at 1 *s.* 8 *d.* in the pound; poundage is another name for it in another form; there is but one set of prices, and those are the prices that are always paid.

455. Is it not very difficult to carry out a system of that kind effectually, so long as frame rents are permitted; is there any security that the middlemen will not charge frame rent to the workman, so that in that case the workmen would be subject both to pay frame rent to the middlemen and also be subject to a deduction on account of the work brought in?—I believe, so far as our own undertakers are concerned, they all pay net wages in the same way, there is no difference whatever; I believe they all adopt the same system.

456. But there would be danger of that unfairness, would there not, if the manufacturers in general were to adopt that system; what I mean is, that the

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poundage or deduction would be made on the work brought in by the middlemen, and at the same time the middlemen would be charging frame rent to the workmen?—It is possible that any wrong may be committed where profit is in question; human nature is pretty much the same in all districts and in all manufactures. I do not conceive that there is more cupidity among our manufacturers than in any other branch of manufacture; but the fact is, that if you wish to make men honest and honourable, and to act upon principles of justice and equity, you must compel them to do so.

457. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do the answers which you have given relative to the trade apply to Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire, and the trade generally, or were your observations chiefly confined to your own manufacture at Leicester?—They applied to the whole framework-knitting trade of the United Kingdom. There are about 45,000 frames altogether. Probably 10,000 of those are going through the processes of repair, laying down, and so on, and the other 35,000 are eligible for work.

458. Have you a knowledge of the way in which the trade is carried on at Nottingham, equal to that which you have with reference to your own trade?—I understand the mode generally, but you will have Nottingham witnesses here in all probability, and I would rather not speak of matters not within my personal knowledge.

459. Mr. *Ingham.*] I think you have said, that within the last three years ten persons have adopted your system?—About ten houses.

460. Within the last three years?—Yes.

461. How long ago is it since you yourself commenced the new mode of dealing with your workmen?—Several years since; in one department we looked back for two or three years in order to see the rental of machines in full employment, and it turned out to be eighteen pence in the pound.

462. What was the date of that?—That evidence was given, I think, by a younger brother of mine.

463. In 1845?—In 1845. In that case we found it to be eighteen pence in the pound. That system has been adopted, and it has been worked in that department for ten years at eighteen pence.

464. Within the last three years ten houses have voluntarily adopted the system on which you are now working?—Yes, I think about ten houses.

465. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is that in Leicester, or generally?—In Leicester; I do not think it has been done anywhere else; some of those are undertakers, and some are manufacturers.

466. Mr. *Ingham.*] What number of frames would you say on an average these ten parties had been previously in the habit of using and letting out?—I should think in all probability there would be amongst them some 600 or 800 frames.

467. I think you say that 45,000 was the total number of frames engaged in this manufacture in the United Kingdom?—Yes, including Scotland and Ireland.

468. Do you know what portion of that number are in the city of Leicester itself?—From about 7,000 to 8,000.

469. Then it appearing that the total number of frames in Leicester is about 8,000, the owners of as many as 600 or 800 of that number have voluntarily adopted the better syttem?—Yes.

470. So that there may be ground to hope that their example may be extended?—Not the slightest.

471. Mr. *Cobbett.*] When you talk of the number of frames, are you speaking of all sorts of frames, or of the narrow frames only?—All frames. The proportion of wide frames to narrow was formerly about 7,000, now it is 10,000; I should say that there are 10,000 wide frames, and 30,000 narrow frames that are available.

472. Mr. *Ingham.*] In Leicester how many narrow frames are there out of the 7,000 or 8,000?—I should think, perhaps an eighth.

473. You said you thought that for bad work a system of deduction was not so good as a system of dismissal?—I do not like the irresponsible power of deducting whatever a man pleases. I do not like a man to have the power of saying, as is said, "This work was to be paid for at five shillings; but it is rather slack, and therefore I shall take threepence or sixpence off." I would rather say, that if your workmen are not of the first calibre, you had better dismiss them. I think the power of dismissal is quite sufficient.

474. Is

474. Is there, in any branch of the hosiery trade, the same thing that there is in many trades in England, and very commonly in France, a sort of joint inspectorship; that is, inspectors chosen, some of them by the workmen and others by the masters, to determine questions between them?—There is not; but I think that such an institution would be beneficial. I think that the institution of such a Board would prevent many cases coming before us on the bench; we cannot, as magistrates, decide upon them; they are obliged to be referred to arbitration.

475. You are aware that it is now done extensively in the north of England amongst shipwrights?—I think it would be well to institute a Board of that kind.

476. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does the Paper which you have put in, professing to show the amount of wages earned by the two men, father and son, whose names you have given us, for 11 months, imply that they were working at full time?—I do not know anything of them beyond the fact that that was all the work they did, and they have worked at it for a great many years.

477. You do not know whether this Paper implies that they were fully employed during the whole time?—They have always had full employment.

478. And the comparison which is made on the other side is made under similar circumstances?—Yes.

479. I find that in the one case, upon the old custom, a deduction is made of 4*l.* 14*s.*?—Yes.

480. Reducing the net earnings to 16*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*?—Yes.

481. In the other case, taking the deduction of so much in the pound as an equivalent for rent, 1*l.* 14*s.* is deducted, leaving a net balance of 18*l.* 13*s.* 5*d.*—Yes.

482. The difference is to the advantage of the workman?—Yes.

483. The difference is between 29*s.* 6*d.* per month in the one case, and 34*s.* in the other?—Yes.

484. In other words, your system of poundage results in an advance of a shilling a week to the workmen?—To the slow workmen; they have full work; but they are slow men, they cannot do work to the power of the machine, which is capable of producing three dozens where they produce but one.

485. I assume that the two frames have been working full time in both cases?—But one frame will go three years and another nine; one will pay 22*l.* 10*s.* and the other 7*l.* 10*s.*; these two men have had nothing done to their frames for nine years.

486. In the first case the result is 27*s.* 6*d.* per month upon the reduction of rent; in the other case, on your plan of the abolition of rent and the substitution in its place of a poundage system, the result is 34*s.* a month; or in other words, it is a rise in the workman's wages?—No, it is not a rise in his wages.

487. His earnings?—Yes.

488. This is effected by a voluntary arrangement between you and the workmen?—It is effected for "Auld lang syne," because I find, that upon the old system the man has paid by way of rent 22½ per cent. upon his production, and then, I say, that for the rest of his life he shall work at 8 per cent., whether I get the prime cost of his goods or not.

489. As regards the workman, the fact is, you have admitted that the adoption of your system has been an equivalent to a rise of more than a shilling a week in his earnings?—It has given him 3*l.* out of 20*l.* more than he had before under the old custom.

490. And that with the same machine?—Yes; supposing his labour to produce 4*s.* gross, the level of that labour upon the net system would be 3*s.* 8*d.*; I must contract with that man at 3*s.*, though I pay his neighbour 3*s.* 8*d.* if I am to have the same advantages that I had before, but I do not choose to do so.

491. The machines are yours?—The machines are mine.

492. Were there any outlays made during these 11 months?—No; there have been no outlays made for nine years.

493. So that this deduction was clear?—Perfectly clear.

494. Have you any system of allowing for outlays on the value of machines?—Yes; a machine that gets 12*s.* a week will make 450 dozen of hose before it wants repairing; it may do it in three years, or it may do it in nine years; the outlay is the same in either case.

495. This matter being effected between you and the man voluntarily, and being, in point of fact, a rise in his wages, would you, as a man of business, recommend that the advance or reduction of wages should be regulated by Act of Parliament?

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Parliament?—Of course not; I would carry out the general principle if it brought down a pound to a farthing.

496. You have been enabled then to effect an arrangement with the workman which is equivalent to an advance in his earnings?—I do not consult him; I give him that to which in equity he is entitled, but I throw 400 frames overboard.

497. You having effected this, do you mean as a practical man to tell the Committee that you despair of other practical men, situated like yourself, carrying it out by means of voluntary arrangements?—I do.

498. Have you not done it in your own case; have you not settled this vexed question by a voluntary arrangement?—Yes.

499. What then makes you despair of the same thing being done by your neighbours?—Because they can get an infinitely greater profit in the one case than they can get in the other; they work upon the principle of profit upon the tool.

500. I presume that that principle is acted upon only by the very small manufacturers?—No; the largest house in the trade systematically, and for years, in times of depression gave out half work and took full rental.

501. *Chairman.*] I think you say that that was done for years systematically?—Yes, for years systematically; I should think for 20 years.

502. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The workpeople were unable to contend against that system?—Of course they were.

503. No other employment being open to them?—No; a frame is not likely to be thrown aside if a profit can be got out of it.

504. You have alluded to the Lancashire manufacturers, who are well known to take the lead in all mechanical improvements; are you aware in former days, when the handloom was in use, a system of deduction from the rent of the loom existed in that county?—I am not aware of it.

505. But you are aware that in the large manufactories, where the machinery and property belonged to the manufacturer, no deduction was made for the use of tools?—I am aware of that.

506. Are you aware that there are deductions from the rent of cottages inhabited by workpeople?—Yes.

507. What distinction do you draw between the house as a tool and the frame?—The house has constant occupation whether the occupier be well or sick, employed or not employed; a man having a frame has no beneficial occupation of it except when he is employed; you might as well apply the principle to a farm; there the crops grow, the beasts feed, and the seed sown springs up by the operation of nature, whether the occupier be sick or not; the cases are not parallel.

508. If a man is not employed, and still the rent of his cottage is taken, is not that a hardship upon him?—No; the man has the cottage for occupation.

509. But I am supposing the manufacture to be suspended?—It never can be said that houses and land stand upon the same footing as frames.

510. Is not a cottage property, and is not a frame property?—They are both property, but a frame is a tool employed to get a profit on a certain manufacture, and that profit should be got in a legitimate way. A house is occupied for the use and accommodation of a family, and the houses of the poor ought to be a great deal better than they are; it is of no use canting about decency and morality while you leave your cottages in the state in which they are left; they are so constructed that common decency cannot be observed in them.

511. Even upon your poundage system, is not an equivalent given for rent, although of a smaller amount?—You convert the gross wages into real wages, at the standard of the time.

512. That is doing what has been done ever since the factory system has been in existence in Lancashire, is it not?—Yes.

513. How is it that that which is done there, and which you yourself have done, you despair of seeing done by others than yourself in Leicester?—Because I was obliged to go out of that department myself. I was compelled to throw 400 machines overboard; a good old machine in a good skilled hand would, if worked factory hours, produce 12 *s.* gross or 11 *s.* net wages, but they are not allowed generally to produce more than five or six, according to the statement of the Commissioner.

514. Is it not the fact, that in Leicester there is a considerable advance making in the improvement of machinery?—There would be if the old ones were thrown aside.

515. But according to the general principle acted upon in trade, if the manufacturer saw that he could produce a more profitable result by the introduction of a new machine, would he not as a matter of course introduce it?—There could be no profit like that which is derived from the rent system. *J. Biggs*, Esq. 1 May 1855.

Richard Mitchell, Esq., was again called in; and further Examined.

516. Mr. *Cobbett*.] YOU were asked what would be the effect of abolishing the frame rents, and you said, that the only effect of it would be to raise the price of goods?—Yes. *R. Mitchell*, Esq

517. Have you made any calculation as to what would be the rise in the price of goods if the change you contemplate should come into operation?—It would depend very much on the articles that were made; some would advance more than others; I should say from 2½ to 5 per cent.

Veneris, 4° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Wickham.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Biggs.
Sir Joshua Walmsley.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

John Biggs, Esq., called in, and further Examined.

518. *Chairman*.] DO you see any difficulty in the way of carrying on the trade without the intervention of middlemen?—It would be quite impossible to carry the trade on without the intervention of parties who could superintend. *John Biggs*, Esq. 4 May 1855.

519. In a portion of the evidence given before the Commissioner, there it is stated that it was so about half a century ago?—It might be, but then the whole manufacture of the country would not, at that time, be equal to the manufacture of one house at the present day.

520. This question, I find, was put to a workman named Cave; it is question 1692; he was asked: "Was it the practice, when you were first in the trade, to take out the work direct from the warehouse?" The answer to that is, "Yes, we always took the work out then; there used not to be so many of those masters or middlemen as there are now. At the time I first went into the trade you could always take the work out yourself from the warehouse." What I want to ask you is, whether that might be done now as it was then?—It is utterly impossible; besides which, it would be of no benefit to the workmen at all.

521. Mr. *Cheetham*.] I suppose these middlemen have arisen from the necessities of the trade?—From the division of labour.

522. And the workmen they employ have found it advantageous to continue in their employ under the existing system?—Yes; you will have a middleman examined to-day who has carried out the net system with probably a hundred men. I sold him, I think, a hundred frames some time ago; he has carried out the net system for nine years, and there has been the utmost concord.

523. Are the hundred frames to which you allude his own property now?—His own property.

524. And the net system which he is carrying out, I conclude, is the system which you have adopted?—Exactly.

525. Not an actual abandonment of the interest on capital invested in his frames, but a reduction in the amount?—I do not think there is any objection on the

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the part of the men to an equitable return of interest on capital; their only objection is, that custom is at war with equity.

526. But in this case the middleman has arranged this point?—He works precisely upon the same principle as we work.

527. And he has done all this as a private arrangement between himself and his own workmen?—Yes.

528. Are you acquainted with the other deductions which the middleman makes besides a deduction for frame rent?—I am not particularly acquainted with them; I think it would be better that you should examine a middleman, who would be able to state all the details.

529. Are you aware that the deductions or stoppages which he makes are also the subject of complaint by the workmen?—I am aware, from the evidence which is contained in these volumes (referring to the reports of the Commissioner), that it is a ground of very serious complaint.

530. As you advocate the regulation of this overcharge for rent by Act of Parliament, would you not also regulate these complaints as regards stoppages in the same way?—Most certainly not; I would not have Parliament interfere with the details of manufacture between employers and employed in any way; I would have you cut the cancer out of the system, which cancer has been eating into it for a hundred years; the system which has been adopted has been based upon a wrong principle.

531. Would it not only be following out the same principle if the stoppages made by the middlemen were also resolved into a net charge?—It can be carried out with as much facility by the middleman and his workmen as between us and the middlemen.

532. Not only as regards the rent question but also the other stoppages?—Entirely.

533. Can you state whether the particular middleman to whom you allude has already effected this as regards the other stoppages?—Yes, he told me this morning that he has worked upon net system for nine years.

534. So that, in his particular case, the Bill contemplated by an honourable Baronet, a Member of this Committee, would be perfectly inoperative?—He is already acting on the principle which the Bill contemplates.

535. Therefore any legislation as regards that individual would be inoperative?—It would be as unnecessary as it is with regard to myself.

536. Can you tell me what the average return is that is received for the investment of capital in frames?—Upon which principle?

537. I will put it in this way: I am informed that a profit of 200 per cent. upon the value of the frames can be made by frame rents; suppose I wish to invest 5,000 *l.* in that way, what would be the result, should I obtain that return?—It would depend upon your nerve and your want of integrity.

538. I am supposing that I am merely a holder of these frames, could I obtain a rental, producing 200 per cent. upon an investment so made?—You can place your thumb on misfortune to any extent, because it has no protection.

539. As a practical man of business, having a portion of your property invested in machinery, you might, I should think, give me some idea. Suppose you have 5,000 *l.* invested in machinery, what is the return for it; does it make 5, 10, or 200 per cent?—I think, if I recollect rightly, the evidence that was given with respect to our own case before the Commissioner, was to the effect that in two years, when a thousand of the old machines were in full work, employed in the way in which we employ them now, for the purposes of production, the two plans were perfectly, as regards results, equal.

540. But are you not in that case mixing up the manufacturer with the frame-holder; I am putting this supposition to you; I am, we will say, a holder of frames simply, and want a return for my investment?—And you not a manufacturer?

541. Not a manufacturer?—Then you would not get a farthing; you could not employ a frame.

542. So that, in point of fact, this complaint is one which originates from the combination of the manufacture and the possession of the frame?—Undoubtedly.

543. So that if a party, hearing of these large returns in the way of per-centage, were to come into Leicester and invest his 5,000 *l.* in machines, he would find himself in the position you state?—He would find himself under the necessity of selling out the next week for the best price he could get.

544. Then

544. Then this paper, which you put in the other day, shows that, as regards a combination, there is, upon the system adopted, and which is complained of, an overcharge, in your opinion, of something like 14 per cent., adopting your net scale of payment, and taking the old fashioned rental system?—No; if you will allow me to go a little into detail I will do so. That is an extreme case. I told you that 400 frames had been thrown overboard; that we could not work upon this principle, but that we retained the old man Foulds and his son from a feeling other than a business principle. I have here a table showing the production of five frames; of course in discussing this matter it is most desirable to arrive at the truth as nearly as possible; I have taken here the production of the same five narrow frames upon the old custom principle and upon the net contract principle, and the results financially: Frame No. 1, I conclude at the present time would produce, if fully worked, that is, worked regular factory hours upon the Yorkshire and Lancashire system, 12 *s.* gross wages per week; I mean that a skilled hand would get 12 *s.* gross wages; as a matter of course those hands only form a section of the population; one frame making three dozens of hose at 4 *s.* a dozen, would give 12 *s.* a week; that would be 150 dozen per annum, or 450 dozen in three years; that is the extent in all probability to which a frame will work before it wants what is called moulding, which requires an expense of 3 *l.* 10 *s.* to be laid out upon it. Another man will produce two dozens a week at 4 *s.* that would be 8 *s.*, and that would be a hundred dozens per annum, and he would be four years and a half in making the 450 dozens; he only makes the same number, and only uses the tool to the same extent, but then he would be a year and a half longer about it than the other; another section would make a dozen and a half each, and that section would be about two to five of the whole; so that the third and fourth frame I would set down at 75 dozens per annum, and they would be six years in producing the 450 dozens. Then to balance the extreme case with which I started (of a man working according to factory hours, and getting 12 *s.* a week), there comes the extreme case you have in your hand, in which in that frame a man only does one dozen a week, getting 4 *s.*, that is, making 50 dozens per annum, and he would be nine years in doing his 450 dozens. All those men wear the machine to the same extent; they do not wear the machine one of them more than another, but the first man pays in his three years according to the old custom 7 *l.* 10 *s.* for his frame, the frame originally costing 5 *l.*; the first man who does the three dozen a week would pay 7 *l.* 10 *s.* in three years before the thing wants recruiting; the second man would pay 11 *l.* 5 *s.*; the third and fourth men would each pay 15 *l.*; and the fifth man (and this is with respect to the paper you have in your hand) would pay 22 *l.* 10 *s.* in the nine years before he had done his 450 dozens.

545. All those discrepancies arising from a difference in skill on the part of the workmen?—Or from other causes.

546. I thought you assumed every frame to be fully employed for the sake of comparison; that there was full work given out, and that the difference in quantity originated from the difference in skill?—No, I am assuming that there is a difference in the production; I made this Table in order to show the relative working of the two systems; and then on the other hand, supposing that you work on a net principle, you find, if you look at the first frame, that it earns 12 *s.* in a week, and the shilling is taken off, making it 11 *s.*; if you take that 11 *s.*, which is the net amount the man receives, and convert it into a net price, you convert it into a price at 4 *d.* less, which for the three dozen realizes the shilling; in that case the two systems work precisely in the same way; but then it falls off as you go on; for in these five frames the first man pays 7 *l.* 10 *s.* during the three years while he makes the 450 dozens; the second man pays 7 *l.* 10 *s.* during the four years and-a-half while he makes his 450 dozens; the third man only pays 7 *l.* 10 *s.* during the six years in which he makes his 450 dozens; the fourth man does the same, and the fifth man only pays 7 *l.* 10 *s.*; that man there, instead of paying 22 *l.* 10 *s.* under the old system, upon the net principle, only pays 7 *l.* 10 *s.* for working a frame to the extent of 450 dozens; the consequence is, that the actual rate of labour in the two cases of production would be 2,250 dozens by the five frames in both cases. As far as Leicestershire is concerned in the worsted trade, the value of the material, of the dyeing and the preparing of those goods for sale, would be equal to about 6 *s.* 4 *d.* upon the 3 *s.* 8 *d.*, which would make the value about 10 *s.*; if you take the amount paid under the one system, and the amount paid under the other system, and see what the per-centage is upon the

return of those five frames, you will find it would amount to about $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. upon the old custom profit; and upon the new one it would amount only to about 1 per cent., so that there would be $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. under the old custom against the producers.

547. So that as regards the rent and charges exclusively for the use of the machine, there is no overcharge at all?—This I suppose to be in its integrity the working of the two systems, and then beyond this you come to what is contained in these three volumes, and the abuses there referred to depend, as a matter of course, upon the cupidity of the individual, and upon the nerve with which he can carry out matters of injustice.

548. But is it not practically found, that the manufacturer who conducts his business on the highest principles and with the best machinery, can always avail himself of the best talent in the district?—There are these 30,000 old machines hanging like a millstone upon the trade, and it is only by the introduction of new machines that the large houses can keep their places. I have been obliged to throw 400 of those machines overboard. I have sold 200 of them for 3 *l.*, and 200 for 30 *s.*, because, as a matter of course, I cannot conduct my business on a principle that only yields me one per cent. where it yields other parties four and a half per cent.

549. But have you not other advantages; you get more skilled workmen, do you not, and a greater quantity produced by your machinery?—I take the skilled workmen and put them to machines costing 50 *l.* instead of 5 *l.*

550. If by the substitution of the net system and by the introduction of new machinery you can more effectually conduct your business, produce a better article, and carry on your work with greater satisfaction, is not that a sufficient inducement to you to follow out that system without the intervention of an Act of Parliament?—I do follow it out on my own account; it can do this section of the population no good for me to throw 400 machines overboard, to deny them the use of my capital and to abandon the trade; by doing so I should abandon them to the tender mercies of other parties, who at any rate will not do better for them than I was disposed to do myself.

551. You say there are 20,000 or 30,000 of these old frames, which, so long as they continue in existence, or so long as employment can be found for them, will still be used oppressively as regards this rent question?—They will be worked.

552. And in working them upon the old system of rent, injustice is done to the workman?—As long as they last, helplessness will be entirely at the mercy of the employers.

553. But that inducement leading the employers to find work for the men, is not that a benefit to the workman?—It strikes me that it is a great outrage upon politico-economic principles to throw into an already crowded market a still greater amount of production. When stock is in excess, you do that which is directly opposed to everything that is sound in principle if you go on increasing the quantity.

554. Who holds the stock?—The recipients of the rent.

555. The manufacturers?—Yes.

556. The capitalists?—Yes.

557. Would you call in the aid of Parliament to protect the capitalist?—The capitalist would not produce such an amount of stock if it were not for the frame rental that is obtained.

558. If he makes it does he not find employment for the workmen?—But, I say, the employment of the workman is a bane to him when the wages he gets are below the workhouse level.

559. Admitting the inefficiency of the system, and all the evils connected with it, is that work worse than none?—I think it is infinitely better to throw 10,000 frames out of work than to give to the workman employment upon such terms. I think it would be much better to throw 10,000 people upon the poor rates, and to elevate them to pauperism.

560. Can you speak at all as to the Nottingham and Derbyshire districts?—Yes, I can, but I had rather not speak beyond my own personal knowledge. Perhaps the Committee will allow me to observe, that the Chairman asked me the other day "How many persons were employed," and I said "From two to three or four thousand;" at that time I had a partner, a brother, who is now living in Kent, and I wish to state that, in expressing my opinions, I am not to be understood as expressing the opinions of the members of my present or late firm;

firm; the individual members of it hold, perhaps, different opinions; they may think, perhaps, that legislation would be of no service at all. I have received a letter from my brother in Kent this morning, in which he says that the helplessness of the people, and the excess of the old machinery, will over-ride any Act of Parliament whatever; I should wish not to compromise him, but to have it clearly understood, that I have only been expressing my own individual opinions throughout the whole of my examination.

561. If you were to throw these 10,000 people upon the poor-rates, I need hardly ask what you think the poor-rate payers would say to that?—I should pay no attention to poor-rate payers, I should deal with the thing as a legislator, with a view to the general well-being of the community; you have a peculiar condition of society to correct, you have these frames perpetuated for three or four generations. I can mention an instance which I heard of yesterday of a frame having been worked for 60 years; it was worked for 20 years by a man before it was what is called moulded; it was then worked for another 20 years more by the same man before it was again moulded, and he worked at it for some 10 or 15 years after that before he died; there are many such instances as that; as a matter of course, the frame must have been made of very different materials from frames generally in use, and it must have cost a great deal more than frames do now.

562. Was that frame the property of the workman?—It was the property of the workman. That was at the end of the last century.

563. Under this net system of yours, do you find any difficulty in preventing your frames being used by other manufacturers?—I have the power of dismissal, as a matter of course, and that is quite sufficient protection for me; I do not want anything penal; but, beyond that, the excess that exists is a sufficient protection. If it were not for the excess that lies upon the market we should have none of these matters to talk over.

564. But that excess, I presume, you would not deal with or regulate by Act of Parliament?—That excess I would deal with in this instance, with respect to the narrow frames, by Act of Parliament, because it can never be removed without an Act of Parliament; while a greater profit can be got by means of frame rents than can be got working upon the principle of production.

565. Is there not the introduction of new machinery worked by steam-power now that will have the effect of removing them?—Yes; there is the introduction of the circular machine.

566. As that progresses, will not the use of the other decline?—The probability is, that it will operate still further upon the workmen, and reduce them to a lower position than they are now in.

567. And that process of throwing men working the old frames out of employment is an inevitable course of events which no legislation can interfere with or prevent?—If 10,000 of them could be thrown out of employment to-morrow it would be (as far as their own interest is concerned, although they would not believe it,) the very best thing that could possibly happen to them, because they would be obliged, in that case, in the nature of things, to adapt themselves to new machinery and go into new departments, which they never will do in all probability while they can be supplied with these old machines.

568. In adopting this net system, would you have the prices fixed by some board of masters and men?—I would let them reduce the wages as low as they pleased, but it should be done equally to all; I stated in the evidence I gave the other day, that the same article is paid for at 3*s.* 8*d.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.* 4*d.* and 3*s.*, and so long as there is anything like public opinion in England, that public opinion will be in support of equality. I do not believe that under the net system inequality could exist to such an extent as I have stated. It might exist in holes and corners, but it would be impossible for any manufacturer, paying 500*l.* or 1,000*l.* a week to say to the heads of departments, "Pay John 3*s.* 8*d.*, pay Tom 3*s.* 6*d.*, pay Charles 3*s.* 4*d.* and pay Harry 3*s.* for the same article." The fact of the case is, that if he had a man at the head of a department who would carry out those instructions, that man would only be fit for the place which the felon occupies.

569. The difference arising from the less amount of work which one man produces from a machine than another?—Yes.

570. Are you at all acquainted with the system which is adopted in Lancashire?—I am not.

571. Do you know that there is one universal price paid to the weaver there?—Yes.

John Biggs, Esq.

4 May 1855.

572. And that a skilled man produces more work than a man less skilled, the price per piece being alike to both?—Yes.

573. Is that the system which you propose to adopt here?—Exactly, I propose that the same price should be given for the same article.

574. There naturally might be some little difference, might there not, in the different districts of counties as to the scale of prices; they might not always be the same?—It is possible that a time of great demand might come when the price of the dozen that has been paid 3 *s.* 6 *d.* for, might be lifted voluntarily to 4 *s.* There might also possibly come a time of great depression, and the price might be reduced to 3 *s.*, but still there would be a uniformity in the price.

575. And that is what you wish to attain to?—Exactly so.

576. But you despair of what you yourself have done, and what is done universally in Lancashire, being carried out in Leicestershire, Derbyshire, and Nottinghamshire in this trade, without an Act of Parliament?—It cannot be done while 4¼ per cent. stands against 1 per cent. It is not in the nature of things. It is obliged to be abandoned by every house in the trade; but there is another thing which I should wish to state to the Committee; that the interest of capital invested in narrow frames, let at 1 *s.* per week, is covered by the interest accruing from the receipt of that rental.

577. After deducting the expense of repairs?—Yes.

578. And after deducting all stoppages for short time?—Yes; say the frame costs 5 *l.*, and that is a liberal allowance. The first year there is 5 *s.* interest lost to the owner, the second year there is 5 *s.* 3 *d.*, and the third year 5 *s.* 6 *d.*, the fourth year 5 *s.* 9 *d.*, and the fifth year 6 *s.* Altogether he would lose during the five years the frame was worked 1 *l.* 7 *s.* 6 *d.* His receipts are 1 *s.* a week; he receives in the first year 50 *s.*; as a matter of course the interest on that for a year would be 2 *s.* 6 *d.*; but the rent being received every week you must take it as half a year, 1 *s.* 3 *d.*; in the second year it would be 2 *s.* 6 *d.* and 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, which would be 3 *s.* 9 *d.*; in the third year, there having been 5 *l.* paid before, which would yield of course 5 *s.*, and the 1 *s.* 3 *d.* again would bring it to 6 *s.* 3 *d.* In the fourth year, there having been 7 *l.* 10 *s.* paid before it would yield 7 *s.* 6 *d.*, and, again, 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, making 8 *s.* 9 *d.*; and in the fifth year it would yield 10 *s.*, and 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, making 11 *s.* 3 *d.*

579. Would there be no repairs?—Yes, but that is a different thing altogether.

580. But out of the accumulation of interest you would have to pay for repairs?—I have shown that you receive from these five frames, upon the old principle, 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; the interest on the original outlay is nil. Then the moulding and the expenses of the five frames I would put at 3 *l.* 10 *s.* each; the moulding would cost 2 *l.*, the sinkers about 17 *s.* or 18 *s.*, and the other expenses about 13 *s.*, making 3 *l.* 10 *s.* altogether, which is a very liberal allowance; that would be 17 *l.* 10 *s.* I should explain to the Committee that there is a wire about the thickness of a tobacco-pipe which passes through the machine, upon which the peculiar instruments that are called jacks work; when this wire ceases to be quite regular the frame is out of condition; after working for three or four, or perhaps for eight or ten years, as the case may be, it becomes out of condition, and wants a thicker wire; after it has had about four wires it ceases to have any inside at all, or to be of any value; it must have a new inside altogether. Each wire is reckoned to depreciate the value of the machine 1 *l.*, so that I have calculated 1 *l.* depreciation for each frame; that is 22 *l.* 10 *s.* to be taken off the 71 *l.* 5 *s.*, which leaves a profit of 48 *l.* 15 *s.* on the old system upon the five frames, or 4¼ per cent. upon the produce.

581. What was the original value of those five frames?—Five pounds each.

582. And what is the net return for that 71 *l.* 5 *s.*?—In five years?

583. In five years?—You lay out 25 *l.* in the first instance, and go on working for five years, and produce 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; then you lay out 22 *l.* 10 *s.* more, and they go on for another five years, and produce another 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; then you lay out another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, and they go on working for another five years, and produce another 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; and then again you lay out another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, and again produce 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; that is the state of the case.

584. Then the 22 *l.* 10 *s.* covers 10 years?—Yes.

585. Then for the first five years you must take 11 *l.* 5 *s.* as the outlay?—No, the frame costs 5 *l.*; when it wants repairing it is repaired for 3 *l.* 10 *s.*, and the carcass is supposed to be depreciated 1 *l.*

586. So that at the end of five years you have sunk 4 *l.* 10 *s.*?—I have spent

4 *l.*

4 *l.* 10 *s.* upon it, that is 22 *l.* 10 *s.* in the five years; I allow but 10 *s.* for the value of the frame at starting again.

587. So that the result shows 4¼ per cent. upon the original value?—No; it shows 71 *l.* 5 *s.* profit in the five years; 71 *l.* 5 *s.* paid in as rental on a 25 *l.* outlay. I pay 22 *l.* 10 *s.* for repairing, and then they are in a position of being able to work again; the wires are rather thicker than they were before, but they will go the same time, and earn another 71 *l.* 5 *s*; then you would spend another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, which would earn another 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; and then another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, which would earn another 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; and then the machines are worn out and go as carcasses, and are not repaired any more.

588. At the end of five years at how much would you value the machines?—I have sold them for 30 *s.*, and I have sold them for 1 *l*, and for 10 *s.*

589. Of course you must deduct that from the net profit you receive?—No, I have already received it.

590. But you sunk your capital to begin with?—Yes; I do not repair them again; they have cost me only the original 25 *l.*; I take that off the 71 *l.* 5 *s.*

591. No; you have only taken the repairs off; you have not taken off what you have lost by the sale of the frames?—I do not sell them.

592. But they are depreciated in value?—Of course they are; after they have gone through four recruits or mouldings they would be valueless, or worth not more than 1 *l.* or 30 *s.* each as carcasses.

593. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] For an outlay of 25 *l.* in frames you would produce in five years 71 *l.* 5 *s.* rent?—Yes.

594. Then you would expend 22 *l.* 10 *s.*?—Yes.

595. And then with the expenditure of 22 *l.* 10 *s.* you would produce another 71 *l.* 5 *s.*?—The frames would then be capable of making 450 dozen, as they were when they started.

596. They would in those five years produce 71 *l.* 5 *s.* more?—Yes.

597. Then you would expend 22 *l.* 10 *s.* upon them again?—Yes.

598. And they would produce another 71 *l.* 5 *s.*?—Yes.

599. Then you would expend another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, and they would produce another 71 *l.* 5 *s.*?—Yes.

600. And they would be worth nothing?—Yes; then they would be sold as carcasses; they would then have a new inside put to them, and go through the same process again.

601. Then your whole expense, including the first cost and your three amounts of repair, would come to 92 *l.* 10 *s.*?—Yes.

602. And you would have earned, by that expenditure of 92 *l.* 10 *s.*, 285 *l.*?—Yes.

603. Then the frames, deducting the 92 *l.* 10 *s.* from the 285 *l.*, would leave you a net for those frames of 192 *l.* 10 *s.*?—Probably that is it.

604. In how many years?—In an average of 20 years.

605. Do you assume the original cost to have been 5 *l.*?—The machines are depreciated in value; 15 years ago they cost 15 *l.* each.

606. Would they not cost as much now?—There is no such thing as the creation of a new narrow machine; there are about 30,000 in the market now, and you may buy a good machine ready and fit for work for 5 *l.*

606*. Is this a correct statement (*handing to the Witness the following paper*)?

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Cost of frame	25	–	–	Earnings in 5 years	71	5	–
Charges for repairs	22	10	–	Ditto - 2d 5 years	71	5	–
Ditto	22	10	–	Ditto - 3d 5 years	71	5	–
Ditto	22	10	–	Ditto - 4th 5 years	71	5	–
Cost £.	92	10	–	Charges	285	–	–
				Frame and charges	92	10	–
				Profit for Interest £.	192	10	–

—Yes.

607. Mr. *Ingham.*] Take a single machine; you say 5 *l.* is the value of it, and it would require repair at the end of five years?—Yes.

608. And then, if you expended 4 *l.* 10 *s.* upon it, it would be a good machine for another five years?—Yes, upon the average.

609. Then, at the end of those five years, you would expend another 4 *l.* 10 *s.*, and it would work for another period of five years?—I should expend 3 *l.* 10 *s.*, and

and allow 1 *l.* in my stock-taking for depreciation, so that I should lose nothing by it.

610. Then, for another expenditure of 4 *l.* 10 *s.*, you would secure another five years?—Yes.

611. Suppose the machine came to an end in five years, there would be 5 *l.* loss to the owner of the machine, to be recompensed by what he would get in the shape of rent?—Yes; but the owner of the machine would not give 5 *l.* for a machine that would not go through four moulds; he would not give 5 *l.* for a machine that had an immense thick wire like a walking-stick, and that was in the last stage.

612. Supposing 5 *l.* were to be absolutely sacrificed in five years, that 5 *l.* would purchase an annuity of 25 *s.* a year?—It would leave a profit of 7 *l.* 10 *s.*; it would pay 12 *l.* 10 *s.* in the five years; if it were thrown into the furnace, it would still yield 12 *l.* 10 *s.* profit in the five years.

613. Suppose you went with 5 *l.* to any person and said, "Now, I will expend this 5 *l.* in an annuity to last me five years," you would obtain from the person who gave the annuity 25 *s.* a year; then, according to this view, you get a shilling a week; so that, instead of 25 *s.* you get 50 *s.* a year; and therefore, in fact, it gives you 100 per cent. upon the capital you expend; by the legitimate employment of your capital the utmost you could get as interest for five years would be 25 *s.* each year, whereas, according to this mode, you get 50 *s.*?—Yes.

614. Giving you 100 per cent.?—Yes.

615. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The owner of the machine would get, distinct from the business, nil or next to it?—Yes; frame smiths, or men who own frames and repair them, will let their frames, and be glad to let them at 5 *d.* a week or 6 *d.* to a manufacturer for the year, to be paid only when they are employed.

616. In this calculation of repairs you assume, that a frame only requires moulding or renewal every five years; is that about the average result?—I have given you the proportions; I have assumed that a frame will do 450 dozens, and that can be done in three years if a man gets 12 *s.* a week; if a frame only does 450 dozens, and if in consequence of slowness or other causes those 450 dozens take nine years to produce, the frame still goes on paying a shilling a week.

617. Assuming the evils of which you speak to result from the continuance of the frame rent system, does not the existence of that system operate as an inducement to the manufacturer to keep his workpeople employed in times when otherwise it would be to his interest to suspend their employment?—There is no doubt that if this principle of profit upon the tool was gone the machines would be set still, as they are now in Yorkshire, when there is no demand for their production.

618. So that, at all events, the system has the advantage of continuing the labourer in his employment when, under other circumstances, he would be unemployed?—It has the advantage, if you call it an advantage, of continuing the employment of a labourer at a miserable rate of wages just below pauperism.

619. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have been asked a good many questions about the principles of political economy and the principle of supply and demand; I understand you to be of opinion that the present system is in direct opposition to all received opinions of political economy?—The present system, so far as it induces a supply at a time when that supply is not wanted, and when the market is full, is in direct opposition to all sound principles of political economy.

620. That, in your opinion, is the necessary result of the present system of frame rents?—The necessary result of taking a profit upon the tool. If the Committee will allow me, I will read what the Commissioner says upon the subject: "One of the grievances most oppressively felt, as evinced by the weight of evidence on the subject, and one by far the most universally complained of, is the system of frame rents; that is a weekly reduction which is invariably made from the earnings of the workman, as rent for the frame in which he works. The evidence both of masters and men is perfectly conclusive and coincident upon one point, namely, that the amount of this deduction is regulated by no fixed rule or principle whatever; that it is not dependent on the value of the frame, upon the amount of money earned in it, or on the extent of the work made; that it has differed in amount at different times, and now does so at different places; that the youthful learner or apprentice pays the same rent from his scanty earnings as the most expert and skilful workman in the trade from his of fourfold the amount; and

and that the practice of this deduction or charge has existed upwards of a century." That is stated in the report of the Commissioner, and it is impossible to improve upon it or to describe it better. If you will turn to the Nottinghamshire volume you will find a statement, that William Storer has five frames, earning, after paying all expenses, clear, as follows: William Storer himself, 7*s.* 10*d.*; Lydia Storer, 3*s.* 8½*d.*; Luke Storer, 3*s.* 1*d.*; Mary Storer 2*s.* 4*d.*; and Anne Storer, 1*s.* 4½*d.*; making a total of 18*s.* 4*d.* Of course each of those frames, notwithstanding the difference in the earnings in them, would pay its shilling a week upon the old custom, and the per-centage would go on in a fearful ratio. That appears in the Commissioner's report; I have not the least doubt that all these cases are correctly stated.

621. You, agreeing in that statement of the Commissioner, do not think that in asking for an Act of Parliament such as you recommend, you are going against the sound principles of political economy?—Most certainly not. As a man of business, I should not wish to go against the sound principles of political economy; I am prepared for any results; I am prepared for wages sinking from 1*l.* to a penny; I am prepared for throwing the women, children, old men, and all those parties who are incompetent to work out of work altogether; I am prepared for throwing into the furnace 10 or 15,000 thousand wretched machines, which do nothing but entail misery on those who are put to work at them. If that were done the community in a financial point of view would save money, and in a benevolent point of view great good would be done.

622. I think you have said that the steam power which has been introduced will, to a certain degree, put these old narrow frames out of use?—No, the steam power will not interfere with them; at present it does not interfere with the narrow frames.

623. Then the introduction of steam power will not, in your opinion, of itself throw out of work these 30,000 narrow frames?—No; I think that while these things yield a profit they will be worked, and that unfortunate people will be found to use and pay rent for them.

624. Mr. *Ingham.*] Then it is not so much the frame rent that you wish to see abolished as the use of frames discontinued?—Yes; I would put down 500*l.* to-morrow if a subscription could be raised to take 15,000 of those frames out of work at once upon the present system, and then they could be worked all upon the better principle, that of production, the principle upon which the wider and better machinery is worked.

625. In a former answer I think you have said that you would not object to a reasonable compensation being made to the owner of a frame by the person using it?—My idea is to prohibit a profit upon the tool, or what is misnamed "rental;" to call it "rent" is almost a desecration of the term.

626. What you wish is the entire abolition of this mode of employment, thinking that it never can give such a remuneration as is consistent with substantial comfort?—I think nothing can cure it but the entire prohibition of a profit upon the tool employed in the manufacture.

627. How would that cure it if they still continued to work to the same extent and receive the small amount of wages you mention?—If there were no profit upon the tools, they would fall into desuetude, and the people would fall out of employ.

628. And you anticipate that there would then be a period of great misery?—If there is a cancer to be cut out, great pain is suffered while the operation is going on, and we must alleviate that as well as we can.

629. You think that it would be worth while to try the experiment of casting upon charity a number of persons now occupied in working frames upon the present system, in order that their children may succeed to some better employment?—I would give, in the workhouse, full rations and education to the rising generation instead of half rations and no education out of it.

630. You think that the existing system of frame rent operates as an inducement to workmen to drag on with an unprofitable employment?—Yes, I think that a custom has existed for a hundred years which is a cancer in the system, and that there is no other power except the power of the Legislature that can operate upon it.

631. And the legislative cure that you would wish to see applied is a complete discontinuance of the use of these frames?—Yes, of the use of these frames probably to the extent of one half. I am prepared for all that. I see what will be the

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consequences as a matter of course, but I think, upon the whole, that a benefit would be conferred upon the body politic.

632. In point of fact, the result is that you want to do that which in 1810 the framework-knitters were trying, in their rough fashion, to accomplish by proceedings which were made punishable by death?—I wish to curtail the number of the narrow frames.

633. *Chairman.*] You have been asked whether in your opinion it is necessary to pass an Act of Parliament to make those regulations which you have pointed out to the Committee you have made yourself, and which you think would be advantageous to the trade; are not frames let exclusively for the purpose of getting the rent which is paid upon them without reference to any profit upon the trade?—No; they are held by frame smiths, and parties of that kind, who let them to manufacturers, who again re-let them to the workmen.

634. And they let them to undertakers and middlemen?—Yes, and perhaps to single men.

635. Those are let for employment, without reference to the hosiery trade?—Yes; they are let at small rentals of 6 *d.* or 5 *d.* a week.

636. As those frames are a profit to the owner, are they not an injury to the framework-knitter?—There is no doubt of it.

637. They depreciate his earnings at the same time that they are a profit to the frame owner?—No doubt.

638. When trade is slack is it not the custom to give out to workmen a small quantity of material for no other purpose than to get the frame rent?—You will find evidence to the extent of one of those volumes to that effect.

639. Is not that the fact?—I believe this report is correct and sound; I do not come here as an accuser. May I be allowed to read what is said upon the subject by the Commissioner, in the correctness of whose statement I entirely concur? He says, "Hence arise what are technically termed 'stints;' that is, in plain English, a direct embargo being placed on the manufacture of more than a defined and limited number of articles in each frame, for which number only an adequate supply of the material is given out to the workman from the warehouse. This stint varies at particular times, under particular circumstances; in some instances it is confined to what would be three full days' work in a week; in others to four, and in some to as little as two. Full frame rent and charges are very frequently deducted from these reduced earnings of the workman who, according to the uniform practice of the trade, is paid by the pairs or dozen." If you ask me whether I believe that to be true, I say I do.

640. Is not, by that means, an unfair advantage taken of you by other hosiers using the common means of obtaining profit, that of the frame and the hosiery manufacture, while you only have your profit on the hosiery manufacture?—No; there is no unfair advantage taken of me, because, knowing the principles upon which all this is proceeding, I save myself from any unfair advantage by selling the machinery and going out of that particular department of the business.

641. But does it not produce an unhealthiness in the trade?—The natural tendency of producing articles when they are not wanted, is to depreciate wages and profits, and to depreciate prices.

642. Does not that tend to an injustice to you who wish to deal in a more fair manner with the workmen?—It has that general operation, no doubt.

643. You have been asked whether the frame rent is not an advantage in keeping the workmen in employment; has not the practice of stinting, by keeping them in employment, a tendency to make their wages below the minimum of subsistence?—Unquestionably; like the Irish cottier upon the con-acre system.

644. Is not the workman compelled to take any quantity of work that may be offered to him in order that he may not be subjected to the penalty of losing the benefit of his frame altogether?—He probably submits to it rather than lose his frame.

645. He is induced to take any amount of wages that are offered to him under the fear of losing his frame?—Probably.

646. Mr. *Gardner.*] I should like to know what your opinions of sound political economy are with respect to legislative interference between the employers and the employed?—I think the Legislature should hesitate very much before it interferes with or comes into the manufacturing circle at all. I am only asking you to look at the disease within the circle, and to cut it out.

647. I understood you to say early in your evidence to-day, that you would not have

have the Legislature interfere with the details of arrangements between masters and men under any circumstances?—I think that any Act you could pass under such circumstances would be overridden a dozen times.

648. Referring to answer No. 436, in your evidence given on Tuesday, I find you propose an Act of this kind: "That from and after the 1st of July 1857, the custom of taking rents for frames in the framework-knitting manufacture be prohibited;" do you consider that an interference with the details of arrangements between masters and men?—No more than I consider the knife of the surgeon in cutting out a cancer an interference.

649. That is a metaphor, and not a reply?—I do not consider it an infringement of the rules of political economy.

650. What are the specific circumstances connected with the hosiery trade on which you rely, to justify the violation of the general principle which you admit, of non-interference?—The existence and perpetuation of a class of machinery that has not been improved; it is in the same position as it was 50 or 100 years ago; it has not been improved, and is not likely to be improved, because a greater profit will accrue from it if worked on that old principle than can accrue from any new inventions or any improvements that can be made. If you will allow me, you will find in one of the pages of this report these words; with respect to the non-introduction of improvements into the hosiery manufacture, the Commissioner says, "Other and totally different causes may have contributed to discourage any attempt to apply mechanical power to the stocking frame. If all obstacles to a correct and properly made article of hosiery by such means could be overcome, it is doubtful whether in a pecuniary point of view it would be a measure of economy in the employers to adopt it; while wages remain, as they have done for years past, almost at the minimum of existence to the workman; while custom sanctions, and his defenceless poverty forces him to submit to pay an exorbitant and disproportionate weekly rent for the machine in which he works; while the mode of conducting the business remains in force, which actually prescribes the very limits of the labour he shall perform, as subsequently shown in the practice of stinting; and while at any time the employer can, at little sacrifice to himself, lay down his one, or his ten or his hundred frames, even the rental of the places in which they stand, when at work, being paid by the workmen, there must be great advantages clearly manifested as derivable from any new system of production, which shall preponderate over those yielded by the present one."

651. Then you would say that whenever in a branch of industry the employers, from shortsightedness, do not adopt improvements which are made, the Legislature should be called upon to pass some Act which should have a tendency to make them improve their arrangements?—No; the employers do not want the Legislature to interfere when they have the curative power in their own hands; for instance, here are proofs they do not. I saw a machine which cost 100 *l.* two years ago; that machine was improved upon last year, and then (the manufacturer acting on sound principles) the machine which cost 100 *l.* was immediately thrown on one side, and another substituted for it which cost 200 *l.*; that would be the case if we had the same control over this machinery as spinners have over the machinery employed in their factories. The Member for Durham told me they had had a fire; they had a parcel of old machinery in their factories which had been worked from year to year, and they had not replaced it from a false economy. The fire threw 500 people out of work for the moment, and destroyed all the old machinery; but the consequence was that the people were enabled after a time to go ahead, and to be constantly employed at better wages.

652. But do you think that Parliament should be called on to interfere in that state of things?—Certainly not, if you can find any other remedy; but the omnipotence of Parliament is the only thing in my belief that is equal to remove this evil.

653. If you refer to the evidence which you gave on Tuesday you will find that your ideas of the omnipotence of Parliament are very limited; for you told us that unless we had the nerve of a Chatham or a Cromwell it would not be of the slightest use to legislate?—I trust that all Chathams and Cromwells are not extinct; I hope we shall see some of them yet; we have wanted them badly enough the last twelve months.

654. We do not sit here merely to consider whether the system of payment of wages adopted in Leicester is exceptional or bad in itself or not, but whether it is a matter on which the interference of Parliament can with advantage be brought

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to bear; I understand that in your opinion the present system of payment of wages is unfavourable to the workman, and if that be so I wish to know why, in your opinion, he does not resist it himself?—Because he has not the capacity; he is in an over-stocked market, and is necessarily powerless and defenceless; his best course would be to decline the work and go to the workhouse, but that is not according to the popular taste.

655. Is there anything to prevent him from doing that at present?—Nothing, save the repugnance he naturally feels.

656. What is the cause of his being so defenceless as you describe him to be?—The cause is the excess in the supply of the products of his labour.

657. In reply to question No. 414, in the evidence which you gave on Tuesday last, you gave us to understand that the rent system is a kind of screen, behind which the workman cannot penetrate; you told us that they were born in the system, and that they think a shilling rent is all right?—No; they have a sort of belief that it does superinduce this miserable state of things in some way or other, but they have not followed out the deductions of the inequality. In point of fact, until the Commissioner's Reports came, we had never paid any attention to the subject at all; we took it as we found it.

658. If men are not sagacious enough to understand that they are doing an unwise thing, if they contract to pay a rent of a shilling a week for a frame which they only work for half a week, do you think that that is any reason why Parliament should interfere?—I think they make the contract upon the fiction (for it is nothing more than a fiction) that full work will be given to the frame; that is always understood when a frame is let; and when a man has a frame, rather than have it taken from him, and rather than submit to go to the workhouse, he will submit to anything his employer chooses to exact, on account of his defenceless poverty, and his repugnance to throw himself upon the union house.

659. You appear to assume that because distress among the framework-knitters and the rent system are co-existent, the former is caused by the latter?—No, I do not assume that.

660. To what extent would you say wages are diminished by the present system?—To the extent of the inequality; the general principle operates upon an article; we will take that article at 4*s.* for a dozen pairs; supposing that the machines did not belong to the employers, they would be given out at an equal price to all the workmen, whereas the rent system superinduces instead of 4*s.*, 3*s.* 8*d.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.* 4*d.*, and 3*s.* a dozen; I say, it would be utterly impossible for you in the face of society, and with anything like public opinion being brought to bear upon it, to pay one man 3*s.* while you are paying another man at the same counter for the same articles 4*s.*; and consequently, I say, that the tendency of a net payment would be to lessen that inequality; of course, different prices might be contracted for by different parties. It is just possible that a man in a remote village, if there was no one in the same village working the same thing, could be contracted with at a less price; but it would be utterly impossible for me to give instructions to my manager to pay five or six different prices for the same description of work; the same work is entitled to the same remuneration, whether there be little or whether there be much of it.

660*. Do you think that public opinion has any objection to a man getting his labour performed at the cheapest rate?—I have no objection to the wages for a man's labour being regulated by sound principles, and to its being reduced to as low a rate as you please upon that principle; but what I say is, let it be done openly. Here is a custom which the Commissioner says is a century old; 9*d.* used to be the rent paid for a machine formerly, when it cost 15*l.*, and now, when a machine costs only 5*l.*, 1*s.* is exacted; custom has taken the place of justice; the workmen think it is an exorbitant sort of thing, but every man seems to be dealt with equally, because every man pays his shilling rent, whatever he produces, and it has been said, though I hope for the honour of human nature it will not be put in practice, that if only six pairs are taken in they would still take the shilling rent.

661. The rent system is rather favourable than otherwise to the industrious workmen, is it not?—If they were all paid on one uniform principle, there would be equal justice every way; whatever the supply and demand caused the price to be, there would be equal justice dealt out to all.

662. There is an inducement, is there not, under the rent system for a man to be industrious, he having to pay his rent at the end of a week; if he keeps his frame

frame idle his rent is still going on?—But the child is at work at the frame, and the old man, who can only make 9 or 12 pairs in a week. I can mention to the Committee one case, which only by accident came to me. An old man called, and laid a pair of stockings on the desk on Saturday; he said his name was So-and-so, and he came from Rothley; he wanted work for a 24-gauge frame. "I have had the frame (he said) for 16 years; I make from 12 to 15 pairs a week, at 4*s.* 3*d.* a dozen; I pay 7*d.* out for seaming, and 1*s.* rent. I worked 11 years at the frame before it wanted moulding; I have worked five years at it since it was moulded, and it will work for six or seven years more; I takes good care of it." That is a fact that transpired on Saturday only; it shows the length of time that that class of frames, in the hands of old men who do not tax them, will last; he would be nine years producing his 450 dozens according to the illustration I have given before.

663. It is not denied that there are plenty of cases of that kind; the question is, whether you can relieve them by passing an Act of Parliament, because, as I understand, the first result of your proposed new Bill will be to send all these people to the parish; that you contemplate?—It will hasten the period when the old frames will be thrown aside.

664. I understood you to say that the first and immediate result would be to throw 30,000 frames out of employ?—Not the immediate result, but the rapid result, as a matter of course; that would depend again on the question, whether supply and demand came to better terms with each other.

665. With the probability, or in the expectation of such a result as that, do you think it desirable to violate the ordinary principles which regulate the relation between the employers and the employed?—Not if you think it better to let the evil remain another century.

666. *Chairman.*] Does it follow as a necessary consequence, that if they are not employed in the hosiery trade, they must go to the parish; are there not other employments that they might have?—Yes; the community comes in, as a matter of course.

667. It does not follow, that, because they have not employment in the hosiery trade, they must necessarily go to the parish?—I do not look upon their going to the parish as an evil; their children would be educated, and would be apprenticed to other trades.

668. Mr. *Gardner.*] Would they not be either thrown on the labour market, generally, and thereby displace a certain amount of labour of other people, or go to the parish?—No doubt of it.

669. In order to carry out the net system in your own business, you are obliged to relinquish a portion of your trade, are you not?—Yes, that portion connected with the narrow frames.

670. What used you to produce by those narrow frames?—Women's and men's fashioned stockings,

671. And what articles do you produce under your present system?—Every variety of articles; from 50 to 100 different articles.

672. In giving up your narrow frames and the rent system together, do you conceive you sacrificed the most or the least profitable part of your business?—Unless a man can work his machinery upon a system as low as it is worked by anybody else, as a matter of course his machinery ceases to be equally profitable; it was not to my taste to do it; and, in the next place, I did not choose to give orders for it to be worked on the system on which it is worked according to the evidence in the Commissioner's Report, and, therefore, there was nothing for me to do, but when it did not pay to abandon it.

673. I understood you to say that, in order to work the narrow frames upon the rent system profitably, such an amount of screwing to the operative was necessary, that it was distasteful to you, and, therefore, you discontinued it?—Yes, as a matter of taste.

674. Are the profits of that branch of the manufacture which is carried on upon narrow frames on the rent system greater than the profits that are derived from other frames?—My belief is, that if four-and-a-quarter per cent. can be got out of the present system, the trade will be carried on for the sake of the profit derived from the rent.

675. What are the gross profits of the present system, do you think?—Four-and-a-quarter per cent.

676. Including what they get upon the tool?—Out of the tool; that is the system

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system upon which those frames are worked; the articles being produced always in excess, are generally sold without much profit upon the production.

677. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The four-and-a-quarter per cent. is the gross profit, including the profit on the tool and on the manufacture?—No, that is the profit on the tool; I can give no evidence as to the profit on the manufacture; that will depend on whether there was a season of demand or not.

678. Mr. *Gardner.*] The profit on the frames amounts to 4¼ per cent.?—Yes; the profit of working the frames on the rent system yields 4¼ per cent. on the production of those frames.

679. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That is not upon the investment; it is upon the production?—It is upon the production; upon the stock produced; for instance, five frames would produce 2,250 dozens before they wanted repairing, which would be equal in value to 1,125*l.*, and the proportion that 48*l.* 15*s.*, the profit upon the rental, bears to that 1,125*l.* is the per-centage of profit, which is shown by carrying on the manufacture on that principle. As I told you the other day, the principle is at war with the other principle; the principle that is acted on is to get the greatest amount of rent for the least possible amount of labour.

680. The result is to glut the market with the produce of these looms, and to put you in a bad position with regard to your customers?—The operation of it certainly is to glut the market.

681. Mr. *Cobbett.*] It makes stockings cheaper to the public, at all events, does it not?—Yes; the probability is, that the manufacturer would not stop working upon that system until his 4¼ per cent. was not a cover for his going on.

682. Mr. *Gardner.*] Of course, with reference to Fould's case, which you mentioned the other day, where you appear to have made him a present of 3*l.* out of 20*l.*, you do not, as a man of business, attribute any weight to that fact?—I do not cite that case as a man of business.

683. It is an exceptional case?—If you want an instance with respect to the wear of machines, I can give you one. At one time we had 1,000 machines; I looked through the book; I went on to about 300, but I had not time to go beyond, and this is the result. The periods which elapsed between one mould and another in 30 out of the 300 frames were as follows.

[*The Witness handed in the following Paper:*]

	Years.		Years.
From 1833 to 1842 - - -	9	From 1826 to 1837 - - -	11
„ 1830 „ 1843 - - -	13	„ 1836 „ 1846 - - -	10
„ 1842 „ 1848 - - -	6	„ 1840 „ 1848 - - -	8
„ 1838 „ 1844 - - -	6	„ 1840 „ 1848 - - -	8
„ 1834 „ 1841 - - -	7	„ 1843 „ 1850 - - -	7
„ 1839 „ 1846 - - -	7	„ 1842 „ 1849 - - -	7
„ 1830 „ 1846 - - -	16	„ 1839 „ 1847 - - -	8
„ 1831 „ 1846 - - -	15	„ 1839 „ 1846 - - -	7
„ 1829 „ 1846 - - -	17	„ 1833 „ 1843 - - -	10
„ 1839 „ 1846 - - -	7	„ 1832 „ 1841 - - -	9
„ 1839 „ 1848 - - -	9	„ 1835 „ 1848 - - -	13
„ 1830 „ 1838 - - -	8	„ 1840 „ 1848 - - -	8
„ 1840 „ 1848 - - -	8	J. „ 1842 „ 1852 - - -	10
„ 1840 „ 1848 - - -	8	B. „ 1836 „ 1846 - - -	10
„ 1836 „ 1842 - - -	6	F. „ 1837 „ 1848 - - -	11

This shows that the time a frame will work before it wants repairing depends very much upon the slowness of the workman, the care he takes of it, and so on; it may be exhausted in three years if he makes 450 dozen pairs upon it, or it may be spread over a long time; half a century ago, when the yarn was spun by women in farm-houses, and when it was excellent soft wool, the frames would work probably half as long again, or perhaps twice as long as they do now, and possibly they might be made of better materials.

684. Mr. *Cobbett.*] The average is five years, I think you say?—Yes.

685. Mr. *Gardner.*] I do not quite understand what security your proposed Bill would give against excessive charges on the part of middle-men, because in answer to a question put to you by a noble Lord the other day you said, "Of course the undertaker could not oppress the workman if rent were annihilated, because you would take the machine out of his hands; you would take the lever away from him"?—Of course he could not oppress him under the name of rental if you annihilated rental.

686. Do you conceive that the measure you propose with respect to rents would be any security against excessive charges on the part of middle-men?—Of course it would not; it would not touch them as a matter of course.

687. You have drawn a distinction between frames and houses and lands, which does not appear to me to be very sound; one of your objections to the hiring of a frame by a workman is that in case of sickness a man has to pay for an article which he does not use?—There is an objection to everything that is not just; that is one objection among others.

688. Suppose you had a tenement let out in chambers to lawyers, and you let a part of that tenement to a barrister who was taken sick immediately afterwards and could not occupy them, would you consider that you were doing him an injustice if you demanded rent from him?—He holds the chambers for a time, and can give them up.

689. So can a man who has a frame give it up at the end of a week?—He can give up his frame and go to the workhouse, but he does not elect to do that.

690. There are many young barristers, you know, who have nothing to depend on but their profession?—Suppose you have one farm that will keep an ox an acre, another farm that will keep a sheep an acre, and another that will not keep a rabbit an acre; do you mean to say, you would be justified in taking the same rent for them all, or that you could get it if you did.

691. You say, "The house has constant occupation whether the occupier be well or sick, employed or not employed; a man having a frame has no beneficial occupation of it except when he is employed; you might as well apply the principle to a farm; there the crops grow, the beasts feed, and the seed sown springs up by the operation of nature whether the occupier be sick or not; the cases are not parallel"?—He would do it by deputy, of course.

692. Upon your principle, he ought not to pay rent?—A man who takes a farm, takes it of course with a view to make a profit of it. We all know land that is not worth 5 *s.* an acre, and we know land that is worth 5 *l.* an acre. It is a beneficial occupation in both cases for the purpose of profit.

693. You still maintain that a frame cannot be considered property, in the same light as cottages and farms?—I think the term rent is a mere misnomer, because rent is a remuneration for capital laid out; this is really a portion of profit. Before the Commissioner, it was said by two or three witnesses, "We consider the term rent a misnomer; it is a name for a portion of profit."

694. The operation upon wages of such a measure as that which you propose, must be one of three things; it must either raise them or lower them, or else it must leave them as they are. Which do you apprehend would be the effect of the proposed interference with or regulation of the payment of wages in Leicestershire?—I think it would tend to equalize the rate; I cannot suppose of course, that an Act of Parliament can raise or lower, or do anything contrary to general and sound principles; of course if the Legislature do anything contrary to general and sound principles, they will bring a hydraulic engine upon them that will crush them to the earth, and make their Bill a nullity; but you see the present system does produce an inequality, and I think that that inequality would, in all probability, be very much lessened.

695. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you recollect an Act of Parliament being passed about 1844 or 1845, the subject of which was, to regulate the delivery of the tickets?—Yes.

696. How long was that Act observed by the workmen and their employers?—It was not observed at all.

697. Mr. *Ingham.*] Is there any new branch of employment or manufacture opening out in your neighbourhood, that is likely to withdraw the men from a desire to get employment as hand-loom weavers?—Not at present; a great number of new branches have been opened out, and it would be highly desirable that some new branch should be opened out, that would absorb some 10,000 of the population.

698. You say, that, during part of the year, these frame-work knitters get employment in the fields?—Yes, in the harvest time.

699. Is there any great additional outlay now going on upon the land, in the shape of draining and agricultural improvements, so as to make it likely that a more continuous demand for labour, not merely in the harvest time, will be created?—I am not aware, locally, that there is anything of that kind going forward that will for years to come absorb any large proportion of the population.

700. But if there were anything of that kind going forward, you would much prefer

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prefer reducing the employment of these frames, by the temptation to other work, to reducing their employment by passing an Act such as that which you contemplate, would you not?—No doubt.

701. The present effect of passing such a law as you contemplate, would be, would it not, greatly to aggravate the sufferings of men who are now occupied in working these frames?—Yes.

702. And it really comes to a question whether we are justified in inflicting great and certain misery on these men, in despair of ameliorating their condition by any better substitute?—I tell you what the evil in the system is, and I tell you that, as a matter of course, the remedy which I propose for it will superinduce such consequences.

703. You think that the evil is so great, that we had better apply the remedy you propose, rather than wait for the patient recovering by natural means?—I think that any other means than an Act of Parliament will be wholly inoperative. As a manufacturer, I should be very glad to put the workmen into some other occupation to-morrow, but at present we do not see any means of doing that.

704. Notwithstanding the improved means of communication tending to prevent labour being bound to the same locality, and notwithstanding the larger application of capital in the improved cultivation of land, you would apply the painful remedy you propose in the hope of producing a better state of things than that which at present exists?—I would apply a remedy however painful, and although I could not use chloroform, I would endeavour as a citizen to relieve the sufferings of the patient as much as I could.

705. Do you think that the remedy which you propose to apply is fully understood by the workmen themselves; do you think they are aware that there must be an intermediate period of great suffering to them?—I do not think they understand it.

706. Do you not think it would be a very serious thing to incur the risk of the revulsion of feeling that must take place among them, if they found that what they have been taught to look to as a great benefit conferred upon them by the Legislature is to result in present disappointment?—The only question is, whether you will defer till a future time that which you know to be inevitable, and which must be done at last.

707. Are we such prophets of futurity as to be able to say it is inevitable; do we not continually see many new branches of trade springing up, which four or five years ago were never thought of?—If two or three new articles were invented, and there was any hope of their being introduced in the course of a few years and of these machines being abandoned, then as a matter of course, it would be better to wait till that time; the fact is that the great evil has been that you pet criminality rather than seek to relieve misfortune.

708. The repugnance of the workmen to the union workhouse you say is so great, that they would rather endure a present amount of misery than go there?—Yes.

709. You could not make the system of relief by means of the workhouse operative without first exposing the workmen to a greater amount of suffering than that which they now endure?—They are below the zero of pauperism already.

710. Still their repugnance to go into the workhouse arises from their apprehension of a greater amount of suffering than that which they now endure?—Yes; they are mistaken; they do not know what care the State takes of them.

711. And that repugnance must be broken down by their suffering more than they now endure before they would be induced to go into the workhouse?—Yes, if the same state of mind continued.

712. According to their present opinion they must be in a state which they would regard as worse than the present?—Nothing in all probability will induce those who are now taking work at a rate on which they cannot exist, to take the other alternative, but the not having a machine in their hands to work. My own opinion is, that down to the minimum of subsistence it is possible that excess may drive them.

713. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Do you think it would be a wise act on the part of the Legislature to break down that noble-minded repugnance which exists on the part of the workman to go to the parish for relief?—"Noble-minded repugnance!" As Napoleon said, "I would trample on impossibilities." I would never leave another generation to deal with a thing which I could deal with myself now. If I give 30 years of happiness to human beings and to their children in the next generation who otherwise would pass their lives in misery, I am almost a delegate of Providence.

714. Mr. *Ingham.*] But you would expose a portion of the present generation to greater suffering than they now endure?—You must either remedy the evil now or wait till a future time; it would be the same thing 20 years hence unless, according to your idea, some new branches of employment should in the meantime spring up which would absorb a portion of the population. Unless supply and demand adjust themselves with respect to the old machines, and unless the use of the old machines is limited to those only which are wanted for production, on sound principles, this will have to be done at some time; it is a question for the Legislature whether it shall be done now or not.

715. *Chairman.*] Is it not the fear that their frames will be taken from them if they do not accept the very minimum of work that compels the workmen to drag on in a worse condition than that in which they would be if they applied to the parish for relief?—I should think it must be their repugnance to going into the workhouse, because their rations now, according to this book, are not equal to the parish rations.

716. Would they not, if they did not comply with the demands made upon them for rent (I am not speaking of yourself, because you adopt another system), run the risk of not having employment in future?—No doubt; they are obliged to comply with the demands made upon them.

717. And if they were to throw up their frames and go to the parish, they would not when good times came again be able to recover them?—Good times never would come under the present system.

718. Allusion has been made in the course of your evidence to the analogy between the framework knitter and the agricultural labourer; you were asked whether, if a framework-knitter out of employ was employed in agricultural pursuits, he would not displace other labourers; is it within your knowledge that the agricultural population of Leicestershire is not sufficient for the agricultural work that there is there?—I think that may be the case during harvest.

719. Should you not think it just as unjust for a workman to have to pay a rent for his tool (the frame), as it is for an agricultural labourer to pay a rent for the use of a harrow or a plough?—I think it is the same thing.

720. Would not that injustice be increased if he was working at piecework, and if when frost or rain occurred, so as to deprive him of work for two or three days in the course of the week, he should be charged at the end of the week the same sum as he would have had to pay if his work had not been so interrupted?—I do not think that any system more calculated to operate as the present system is operating could have been invented by the wit of man.

721. You mean the system of charging the frame-worker a rent for the use of the tool he employs?—Yes; I think it is as wrong in principle as it would be to charge a ploughman for the use of his plough.

722. Suppose a ploughman to be working at so much an acre, and to be prevented from working during part of the week, would it be still more unjust, in your opinion, that he should be obliged to pay the same amount as he would have had to pay if he had used the plough during the whole of the six days?—No doubt it would.

723. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If agricultural employment is so abundant in your county, how is it that these men continue to work at the frames?—Two years ago there was a great demand for Australia; that lasted about three or four months, and that occurred about the time of harvest. In two or three particular articles the supply was on a level with the demand. In previous years men who had worked with different employers had gone out to the harvest, but it had been made a stipulation with them that they should pay a shilling rent; that was a condition which was made on their being allowed to go out to harvest. In that year the men dared to say in two or three instances that they had souls of their own, and in one case a man objected to pay for four frames during the five weeks he was out at harvest; he said, "No, fetch your frames home." That is the spirit in which they should all act; they should say, "We will not pay for the frames during harvest; we will run the risk of getting others when the harvest is over."

724. Mr. *Gardner.*] In that case the workmen resisted the exaction of the rent?—Yes.

725. And resisted because there was a greater demand than usual for their labour?—Yes.

726. And were able on that occasion successfully to resist the exaction?—Yes.

727. *Chairman.*] But after the harvest was over would there not be a risk of

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the workman not being allowed to use his frame again?—That would depend upon whether the employer could find anyone more subservient, or who would answer his purpose better than the other man. If he could not, as a matter of course, he must submit.

728. Lord *J. Manners.*] You were asked a question as to the analogy between a young lawyer taking a set of chambers and a workman hiring a frame; I suppose the lawyer if unable to occupy his chambers might sublet them?—He makes a contract to occupy the chambers, subject to a quarter or half a year's notice.

729. But if he takes chambers he may sublet them if circumstances occur which render it impossible for him to occupy them himself?—Probably.

730. Can a workman hiring a frame sublet it; is it the practice to do so?—It was the practice in Ireland with respect to land in small patches to sublet and sublet again, until 10*l.* an acre was paid for land not worth 10*l.* altogether.

731. When a man is sick, and cannot employ his frame himself, is it the practice to sublet it?—I do not know personally how that is; I should suppose that he would be perfectly at liberty to do so, but the probability is, that if he sublet it to a workman who could do more work than he could, he would not have that more to do.

732. I think you have said that in some cases these frames belong to frame-smiths?—Yes.

733. And that they get a first rent out of the middlemen?—No, they let their frames either by the year, the half year, or the quarter, to stocking-makers indiscriminately, or to middlemen, or to manufacturers; they will let perhaps 50 or 100 of them at 5*d.* a week; one of them told me, the other day, that if taken by the year they would leave 7*d.* profit to the manufacturer who took them.

734. Is that 5*d.* a week supposed to give a fair profit to the owner of the frame?—It is supposed to give a fair profit to the owner of the frame, and to make it worth his while to repair frames, and to carry it on as a business.

735. After that 5*d.* has been paid to the owner of the frame, the workman has to pay a second rent to the middleman who lets it to him?—A manufacturer would take perhaps 50 frames at 5*d.* each, and charge a shilling to the party to whom he let them.

736. Therefore after 5*d.*, which would seem to be a fair rent for a frame, has been paid, a second rent of a shilling is exacted from the workman for the use of the same tool?—Yes, a shilling would be taken according to custom for that which is let by the frame-smith to the manufacturer at 5*d.*; the manufacturer would pay 5*d.* and receive a shilling.

737. In point of fact, then, the workman carries two rents; he has to pay the rent which the middleman or master manufacturer pays for the frame to the frame-owner; and he has also, in addition to that, to pay a higher rent to the middleman?—Yes, up to a shilling.

738. Therefore, in point of fact, the workman carries two rents?—The manufacturer rents the frames of the frame-smith, instead of purchasing them.

739. Mr. *Mundy.*] Is the same rent charged for a wide frame as for a narrow frame?—No.

740. What is the difference?—It varies from a shilling up to 10*s.*; but at 10*s.* rental they now work upon the net system; where you work frames for production and build new frames, they cost 20*l.*, 30*l.*, 40*l.*, or 50*l.* each, and wear out in three or four years. Under the existing system of frame-rents, when skilled labour ceases to be in the machine, and to urge it to the utmost extent of its capability, there is no alteration made in the shilling, let the quantity produced be what it may.

741. Are narrow frames made now?—No, never.

742. Then in process of time they will be extinct?—In process of time they will be extinct; and if the Legislature were to pass a Bill prohibiting rent from being taken for the use of frames after July 1857, that would hasten their extinction.

743. Mr. *Cobbett.*] I understand you now to say, that in process of time the evil of which you complain would cease entirely?—I am afraid not while the frames are in existence.

744. Can they exist for ever?—They have existed for the last century.

745. I understood you some time ago to say, that according to your calculation they would not last more than 20 years?—Not the insides of them, but some of the outsides are very old. When a good carcase can be bought for 30*s.* and a bad

carcase

carcase at 10*s.*, the bad one is, perhaps, neglected. I have sent 500 of them out of the country to be disposed of for other purposes.

746. Do you calculate that what you consider the mischievous system at present in operation with reference to these old frames will be abolished by time?—If four or five new branches of labour could be introduced, so as to absorb 10,000 of the population, those old frames would fall into desuetude.

747. There are 30,000 of the old frames now in existence, are there not?—Yes.

748. All narrow frames?—Yes.

749. When do you suppose the last entirely new frame was made?—That is going back to a period when frames were not in excess, and that is before my recollection. I do not know that I remember a new frame of the width to make one stocking at once being made.

750. A certain number of these narrow frames will always be required?—Yes, unless some improvement in the wide frames should enable them to narrow stockings, and to fashion them in the same way as that in which they are now made, which at present is not accomplished.

751. You do not at present see any prospect of being able to do without narrow frames entirely?—Not entirely; it is thought by some that they will succeed in the attempt, but at present I believe they have not been successful.

752. You say you have thrown overboard 400 frames; were those all old frames?—Yes; I sold them.

753. Were they all that you had? No; we had more.

754. Have you any now?—Not many. There are a few old men who have worked for us for 30 years or so, and the old frames are kept for them, not on business principles, but they are allowed to work on the new system and to have all the benefit of it.

755. You carry on your business with the wide frames?—Principally with the wide and improved machinery.

756. Are those all within a factory?—No.

757. It has been assumed, in a question which has been put to you, that a vast number of persons would be thrown entirely out of employ if the Legislature were to pass such a Bill as that which you contemplate?—Yes.

758. How many do you think would be thrown out of employ?—All would be thrown out of employ except skilled labour; the frames would be worked for the purpose of production then; the details, and all the trouble of taking in six pairs and nine pairs and such amounts of production, would no longer be tolerated; the most skilled labourers and the greatest producers would be taken, because the frames paying nothing, you would seek to diminish the amount of capital invested in machines.

759. To what extent do you think the number of frames would be diminished?—About one-half.

760. And the effect of that would be to throw 10,000 persons out of employment?—More than that.

761. Does it take more than one person to work at a frame?—Yes; there are children employed as winders, and so on.

762. In answer to a question put to you to-day, you said that, in your opinion, notwithstanding the number of persons who would be thrown out of employment, it would be a good thing both for them and for the community; and in fact you said, "I would elevate them to pauperism"?—Yes.

763. Will you have the goodness to explain what you mean by "elevating to pauperism" the persons who would be thrown out of employ?—The expenses of our workhouses are 3*s.* 6*d.* per head for adults and children; a family of six would really be in the receipt of public money to the extent of a guinea for food and clothing; whereas they exist now, in all probability, on 8*s.* or 10*s.* among them; the reports in these books will show that they have received only 4*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.*, and perhaps 5*s.*, for years and years.

764. For their work?—For their work; in some cases it has not amounted to more than 6*s.* or 7*s.* a week for a family; that is a state of things which I believe to be inconsistent and incompatible with either morals or intelligence; I would put them through what they, probably, would consider a painful process, in order that humanity might be elevated in the face of the world, and in the face of Heaven.

765. You mean that by giving to those persons parish relief, you would mend their condition physically, by giving them, in point of fact, more food than they

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now have, and that by the education and better treatment which you would give them, you would mend their condition also morally?—Just so; indirectly.

766. Do you mean that you would take that large number of persons, and put them into workhouses?—As a citizen I am prepared to pay any amount I am bound to pay in order to effect what would be a great good to them compared to their present position.

767. Do you know whether on making application to the parish at the present time they are met by the relieving officer by a statement that they cannot have parish relief so long as they have any work?—We have had large bodies of men about, and they have made those statements to me, and I believe it to be the fact that they cannot when in work have any assistance from the parish unless all the members of the family go into the workhouse together. "As poor as a Leicestershire stockinger" has been a proverb for the last half century; I am, in fact, sick of hearing it.

768. Suppose a whole family, husband, wife and children, were all to go into the workhouse, would they not lose the cottage in which they now dwell?—Yes.

769. Has that any effect, do you think, in inducing them to continue in the receipt of the miserable amount of wages which they now obtain?—I think it operates very much with them. The first time I was mayor, I paid the rent, for six weeks, of several parties whom I did not know. I saw no mode of relieving them in any other way; and I paid their rent for several weeks, in order that their houses might be held for them until they came out of the workhouse.

770. Supposing a Bill, such as that which you contemplate, should be passed, seeing the misery that must arise from sending so large a number of persons into union workhouses, do you not think there might be some means devised of administering relief to them during the time they would be undergoing a state of transition, as it were, from this miserable business to some other?—Yes, I contemplate that. Of course, it is painful; but we must buckle our minds to a painful process, if necessary. As a matter of course, if there is not a demand for their labour in this branch of employment, they must be put to some other occupation.

771. Do you really think, that, practically, 10,000 persons would, upon the passing of this Bill, go into the union workhouse?—I think the tendency of it would be to throw all those who had not skilled labour, and who had hitherto been kept for the purpose of making a profit out of them by rental, out of employment, and that those only would be employed who could be employed for the purpose of making a profit on their production.

772. Do you mean that it would throw them out of that employment which they have hitherto had?—Yes.

773. Do you not think, from your knowledge of the country, that they would get into other employment?—I think they would have got into other employment long before now, if they could. I cannot imagine that the lowest deep would be the selection of those who could get anything higher.

774. Is there not something in their having been brought up in this way?—Something; but I do not think that that would operate against their physical comfort.

775. You have been asked whether there is not an analogy between frame rents and the rents of houses and land. Do you not know that when a landlord lets a farm, he lets it upon a valuation, taking into account that there must be a certain number of rents produced altogether, say three; one to carry on the business of the farm, another for the landlord, and another for the farmer himself; is not that so?—Yes.

776. But is there any such calculation made with regard to frames?—No; the object is to get the greatest amount of rent for the least amount of work.

777. Suppose landlords were to let their farms in the same way that frame owners let their frames, do you not think it would give rise to the same mischief; do you not think it has done so in Ireland, Parliament having, as we know, interfered to regulate sub-letting, upon the very ground that as much was exacted as it was possible to exact, and that sub-letting was, in fact, a national grievance?—Yes; and this is a national grievance; it is parallel to the system of sub-letting that prevailed in Ireland. I have been four times in Ireland, and all over it; and I think there is no parallel to the system of sub-letting which existed there, except this rental system in the hosiery manufacture.

778. Do you think it would be as justifiable in the Legislature to interpose and prevent the continuance of these frame rents, as it was to interfere with and regulate the system of sub-letting in Ireland?—Undoubtedly I do.

779. Lord

779. Lord *J. Manners.*] When you speak of 10,000 people having to take refuge in the workhouses, you say so of course with reference to the size and space within those houses?—Yes, it would be 2,000 families; they would only be admitted if the whole of each family went; if, therefore, you throw one member of a family out of employment, and send him to the workhouse, you must do the same thing as to the whole family; so that you must calculate on 10,000 from 2,000 houses.

780. What would you do if you found the workhouses incapable of receiving such a vast number of people?—Others must be built; the wealth of this country can do anything which is necessary to carry out a great principle.

781. Instead of going to so great an expense, would it not be better that a system of out-door relief should be resorted to?—You have already the Poor-law.

782. Suppose your workhouses are full and this large mass of people wanting to come in?—Then we must raise 30,000 *l.*, or whatever sum is necessary, and build a new one.

783. That, of course, would take some time?—A contractor can do anything. The business men of this country could have taken Sebastopol; if the locality wants a workhouse in 18 months, we build it in 18 months; if it is wanted in 12 months, we build it in 12 months.

784. But during the 12 months occupied in building the new workhouse, what would happen to these people?—I would date the Act on two years to give time for the frames to wear out that are in the hands of people not in the trade; in that case you do no injustice to property; you did not protect the owners of horses when you authorised the laying down of railways; but you may as well respect the rights of property where you can; two years would give the people time to get into a great many other occupations; by that time the frames would become carcasses, and would be useless and worth nothing, the owners of them would not repair them again, seeing they were to have no rent for them, and in two or three years one-third of the machinery would be worked down.

785. Mr. *Ingham.*] And two years would enable you to build additional workhouses?—Yes.

786. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Then, am I understand that the result of an Act of Parliament for the stoppage of this frame-rent would be to send a considerable number of your population into the workhouse?—Do you not think that is inevitable?

787. And, of course, they must be kept by the public?—Yes, of course.

788. Do you not think it is more advisable that Parliament should fix the rate of wages?—Parliament roll back the tides of the sea! It would be against all principle. Parliament can do possible things, but it cannot roll back the waves of the sea, or act against general principles.

789. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you believe would be the practical operation of your proposed Bill upon wages?—The operation of it would be to lessen the quantity of machinery employed.

790. What do you think would be its effect upon a man's earnings at the end of a week; would he carry home more money in his pocket at the end of the week or less, or would he have the same that he has now?—If you admit that the excess of labour in these machines has produced this misery, nothing but diminution in the number of those machines can alter that state of things; their number would be diminished, as a matter of course, till they came to such a point that the demand would be equal to the supply; and then, as a matter of course, on sound principles, the position of the people would be infinitely improved.

791. I ask you whether, in your opinion, the effect of a Bill to abolish frame rents would be to raise the wages or earnings of the frame-knitters; to lower them or to leave them stationary?—It would throw a great many out of employ, and it would throw the frames out of employment for ever; they would go to the furnace; it would lessen the number of workers, and the number of machines, until such time as skilled labour would be in the machines, when they would be employed at the full productive power of the machines; and then, as a matter of course their wages would be in proportion to their production.

792. But you cannot tell what would be the permanent effect of such a Bill?—That would be the permanent effect of it; the machines would be thrown out of gear.

793. Would it permanently lower or raise wages, do you think, or would it keep them

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them the same as they are now?—That would depend upon the supply and demand.

794. Sir *H Halford.*] Do you agree with Mr. Mitchell in the opinion which he expressed, that the best quality of hose can only be made on the narrow frames?—At present.

795. That would make it probable, therefore, that a certain number of narrow frames would be always employed?—Yes, a limited number.

796. Those being the frames principally employed in the country villages?—Yes; there is no doubt at all that, with the laws at present in operation, the villages would be depopulated to some extent, and the people would be thrown upon the towns; that is another thing which is quite certain to occur.

797. You mean to say that that would be one of the effects of abolishing the frame rents?—Yes.

798. Is it not the fact that there is a great unwillingness on account of the depressed condition of the workmen to admit them into the country villages, and that they are excluded from them when it is possible to exclude them?—Yes; houses have been pulled down in agricultural districts, and parties have been sent into Leicester; 10 *l.* houses being taken for them, in order that settlements may be gained, so far as to relieve the land of them; but those are all petty matters; the fact is that as a nation we are bound to support the people in some shape; and so long as they are supported I do not care whether they are in villages or in towns, provided they have their full rations.

799. *Chairman.*] You say that no new narrow frame has been made within your memory?—I have no recollection of any.

800. Are not the 30,000 frames now in existence constantly undergoing repairs by the frame-smiths?—Yes; the exterior bars being all made of iron and brass, hold the complicated machinery. A new interior is worth about 5 *l.* When the interior is worn out, a new interior is put in, and then the machine is capable of going on for 20 years more.

801. When that new interior is put in, the frame becomes as good as new?—For all practical purposes; it answers the purpose of the shilling a week as well as the new one.

802. It is that that keeps up the frame rent?—Yes.

803. Supposing there was an Act of Parliament passed to do away with frame rent, those 30,000 frames now in existence would be annihilated?—Yes; and if other channels opened for labour, the workmen would go to them at once; but independently of that, the frames would fall into disuse when they were worn out, and they would be sold.

804. Of course it would not be worth while to send them to the frame-smiths to be repaired?—No.

805. Lord *J. Manners.*] The value of a carcase you say is about 1 *l.*?—The value of a very superior carcase is about 2 *l.*

806. *Chairman.*] And what is it worth when it has a new inside put to it?—A new inside would cost about 5 *l.* 10 *s.*; it would be worth about 7 *l.* 10 *s.*, but then it would be to all intents and purposes as good as a new frame, when frames cost 15 *l.* or 16 *l.* a piece.

807. Would such a frame command a higher rent than a shilling a week?—No; it would go for a shilling.

808. Mr. *Wickham.*] A new frame would only let for a shilling?—No; in the evidence given before the Commissioner there are instances of frames worth only 50 *s.* letting for a shilling a week.

809. Mr. *Munday.*] The value of a carcase deteriorates, does it not, to a certain degree, by time?—Yes, but the materials are very strong; frames are very plentiful; and when you can have a very good one for a few shillings more than one of an inferior quality, the best, of course, would be selected.

810. *Chairman.*] Having gone on for half a century, being constantly renewed, they might go on for half a century more, or longer than that, might they not?—Yes.

811. Mr. *Cobbett.*] You have spoken about the misery which you think these people would endure if the system were altered; they do, at the present moment, endure great misery, I understand?—No doubt; it is only a question of comparison.

812. They are also very expensive to the State, are they not, by reason of their constant applications for parish relief?—There is no question about that.

813. Have

813. Have you made any calculation, supposing the Bill you contemplate should be passed, as to the difference in the cost between the state of things that would then exist and the state of things existing at present?—It would take 2,000 families, or 10,000 individuals; reckoning each family to consist of five persons, that at 3*s.* 6*d.* a head, would be 17*s.* 6*d.*; it would be about 1,700*l.* a week, or 80,000*l.* a year.

814. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In your own district?—I have been speaking of the whole of the country in enumerating the frames.

815. Mr. *Cobbett.*] What is the cost now, do you suppose?—It is considerable now; I do not know how much, but I believe that in the year 1848, the expenses were 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.*, in the town alone.

816. You mean the town of Leicester?—Yes.

817. Those were not all framework-knitters, I suppose?—No, the whole population.

818. What I want to know is, whether you had made any calculation as to what would be the additional expense?—There are no statistics, I think, which would show what was the number of framework-knitters alone, but, of course, information as to that could easily be obtained.

819. Giving a rough guess, should you say that the expense would be very much greater in a state of things such as you contemplate than it is in the state of things which exists now?—Probably it would be double.

820. Mr. *Ingham.*] The additional expense then would be about 40,000*l.* a year?—I have been speaking of the year 1848, which was a year of great distress, when there were thousands in almost every locality unemployed; I should think it would be doubled.

821. Do you think that 80,000*l.* would be the cost incurred by carrying into effect the alteration you propose?—Two thousand families, at 17*s.* 6*d.* a week, the present cost to the parish of food and clothing, would be 80,000*l.*, and I think that 2,000 families would probably come under the operation of the Bill.

822. Then that would be only an increase of 40,000*l.* upon the average?—We are speaking of the whole of the Midland Counties and other places when we talk of 40,000 frames, so that the 80,000*l.* would fall upon the country at large; Nottingham, and other places, and not upon Leicester particularly.

823. Do you think it would or would not be a much better employment of 40,000*l.* a year of the public money, if you could forward any means of getting employment to these people, so as to tempt them to forsake their present occupation?—I should think it one of the greatest boons possible if new branches could be introduced which would absorb the labour of the people.

824. We all know that Leicestershire is the great grass growing county of England?—Yes.

825. Suppose you were to break up some of that pasture land into tillage, that would occupy a great number of hands, would it not?—There is no doubt that the allotment system in the villages and environs of towns has been useful.

826. Is it not the fact that a tillage farm occupies many more labourers than a pasture farm?—Yes. I hope that if the allotment system is to be encouraged in this country, you will extend to England the laws in force in Ireland with regard to sub-letting, or I think it would be a most grievous evil.

827. Lord *J. Manners.*] Since the Commissioner made his report the allotment system has spread very much in the neighbourhood of Leicester, has it not?—It has.

828. And do you think that beneficial results have followed from it?—Yes; I think that anything that has a tendency to get men up early in the morning, to take them into the pure air, and to improve their intellectual faculties is beneficial; and there is no question that they have been benefited also to some, though not to a great extent in a pecuniary point of view: perhaps they have been benefited to the extent of 2*l.* or 3*l.* a year. I do not think that an allotment of 500 yards can yield more than from 2*l.* to 3*l.* a year in absolute profit.

829. *Chairman.*] But the allotment system materially assists the families of the occupiers of allotments, does it not, by enabling them to raise potatoes and other vegetables?—Yes; I think it has been useful in that way, and it has also been useful in diminishing excess.

[*The Witness delivered in the following Papers:*]

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INTEREST on CAPITAL invested in Narrow Frames let at 1*s.* per week, covered by Interest accruing from Receipts.

1 frame making 450 doz. goes	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	years.
1 - ditto	-	„	-	ditto	-	-	-	-	-	-	4½	„
1 - ditto	-	„	-	ditto	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	„
1 - ditto	-	„	-	ditto	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	„
1 - ditto	-	„	-	ditto	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	„

5 frames) 28½ (5⅔ but say 5 years.

INTEREST. Say cost 5*l.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*	RECEIPTS. £. *s.* *d.*			£.	*s.*	*d.*
1st year	-	5	-	2 10 -	1st year, Interest	- - -	-	1	3
2d „	-	5	3	2 10 -	2d „ „	2/6 + 1/3 =	-	3	9
3d „	-	5	6	2 10 -	3d „ „	5/ + 1/3 =	-	6	3
4th „	-	5	9	2 10 -	4th „ „	7/6 + 1/3 =	-	8	9
5th „	-	6	-	2 10 -	5th „ „	10/ + 1/3 =	-	11	3
	£.1	7	6				£.1	11	3

TABLE showing the Production of the same Five Narrow Frames on Custom Principle, and on Net Contract Principle, and Results Financially.

1 produces 3 dozen hose, at 4*s.* gross wages per week, for 50 weeks, annually, or - - -													150 dozen per annum, which is 450 dozen in 3 years.			
2	„	2	„	-	-	ditto	-	-	ditto	-	100	„	-	ditto	-	450	„	4½	„
3	„	1½	„	-	-	ditto	-	-	ditto	-	75	„	-	ditto	-	450	„	6	„
4	„	1½	„	-	-	ditto	-	-	ditto	-	75	„	-	ditto	-	450	„	6	„
5	„	1	„	-	-	ditto	-	-	ditto	-	50	„	-	ditto	-	450	„	9	„

2,250 dozen, equal in value when ready for sale to 10*s.* per dozen, which is 1,125 *l.*

		Custom. £. *s.* *d.*			Converted into Net, at 1 *d.* in the Shilling, or 1*s.* 8*d.* in the Pound, or One-twelfth of Gross Price. £. *s.* *d.*
The frame going 3 years pays 50*s.* per annum, which is -		7 10 -	- - - -		7 10 -
Ditto - 4½ - ditto - ditto - -		11 5 -	- - - -		7 10 -
Ditto - 6 - ditto - ditto - -		15 - -	- - - -		7 10 -
Ditto - 6 - ditto - ditto - -		15 - -	- - - -		7 10 -
Ditto - 9 - ditto - ditto - -		22 10 -	- - - -		7 10 -
		71 5 -	- - - -		37 10 -
Deduct interest on original outlay of 5*l.* each for five frames, 25*l.* - - - - -	Nil.		Deduct interest on original outlay of 25 *l.* for 5 years -	£. *s.* *d.* 2 6 9	
Moulding and expenses of five frames, at 3*l.* 10*s.* each - - - - - -	£. 17 10 -	- - -	- -	17 10 -	
Depreciation of carcase 1*l.* each bore for five frames - - - - - - - -	5 - -	- - -	- -	5 - -	
		22 10 -			24 16 9
Profit - - £.		48 15 -	- - - -		12 13 3
		4/1[3d] per cent. on value of produce, 1,125 *l.*			1½th per cent. on value of produce, 1,125 *l.*

Mr. *William Cummings*, called in; and Examined.

830. *Chairman.*] ARE you an Undertaker in the hosiery trade?—Yes.

831. In what branch of the trade?—The glove branch.

832. By what establishment are you employed?—By Messrs. Biggs.

833. Do the workpeople work principally in shops or in their own houses?—Some of the men in my employ work in my own factory, and the others are scattered about the town; I have 58 in the factory, and 29 in various parts of the town.

834. Then in point of fact you have about 87 hands altogether in your employment?—I have.

835. Have you that number of frames under your superintendence?—I have.

836. Are all those frames supplied to you by the Messrs. Biggs?—None; they are my own property.

837. They are all your own property, are they?—They were some years since Mr. Biggs's, but I arranged with him, and purchased pretty nearly all I hold now from him.

838. Are any of them Mr. Biggs's frames now?—They are not.

839. A large proportion of them are your own property?—They are; the whole of them.

840. Is it not the custom of Messrs. Biggs to charge a poundage upon the work taken in?—It has not been so since the frames have been my own property; I believe that that system has been adopted since I purchased the frames that I once held of Mr. Biggs.

841. Do all the 87 hands you employ pay you a frame rent?—No; I work entirely on what I call a factory system; a system of no stoppages whatever.

842. Mr. *Gardner.*] A net system?—A net system.

843. *Chairman.*] There is no stoppage whatever then?—No stoppage whatever; for many years I practised that system, and I thought it a very improper one.

844. Does the system you now adopt seem to give satisfaction to the workmen?—It does; I have never heard, during the nine years I have followed it, one murmur.

845. Does that system give greater satisfaction to the workmen than the system of stoppages which is pursued by other manufacturers?—It does; I was under the stoppage system with many of the men I now employ; I used to charge them a rent of so much for superintending, and all that which is commonly called rent and charges; but finding it not satisfactory I made up my mind to recommend another system to their notice; and I drew up a list of prices, which I submitted to them, and they, after due consideration, cheerfully agreed to it, and we have ever since that time worked upon that very system.

846. Are you able to keep them in constant employment?—I cannot say I am able to keep them in regular employment.

847. How many days in the week are they usually employed?—That depends entirely on the demand for goods.

848. For what number of days in the week do you give them employment?—Sometimes I give them three days work in the week, and at other times four days, but their employment is regulated by the demand for the articles they manufacture.

849. Is it not a common practice for the hands not to work on Mondays, and sometimes not on Saturdays?—It is too common, I am sorry to say.

850. Does that arise from disinclination on their part to work on those days, or from their not having sufficient materials to keep them at work?—Both combined, I think.

851. Would it be a practice among them, do you think, if they had sufficient work for six days, not to work on some of those days?—Not if they were under a strict disciplinarian, and under what we might term a factory system.

852. But have they not been led into a habit of not working on those days from having been deprived of sufficient materials to employ them the whole week?—They have, I fear.

853. I think you say there are no deductions to which your hands are subjected at the end of the week?—No, none whatever.

854. How long have you worked upon that system?—From eight to nine years.

855. Is that since the time that the Commissioner went round to collect evidence?—It is.

856. How

Mr. *W. Cummings.*

4 May 1855.

856. How long have you been acquainted with the trade?—About 35 years.

857. They pay for no standing then, in your shop?—Nothing at all; their wages are net; the terms they agree on as wages, that amount of wages they receive.

858. Then the terms on which you agree with the Messrs. Biggs must be different terms to those which you make with the workmen?—As a matter of course.

859. You are in the glove branch?—Yes, and the machinery for that is of rather more value than the common hosiery frames.

860. The workmen are paid so much per dozen, are they not?—They are.

861. What is the difference between the price charged by the Messrs. Biggs and the payment you make to the workmen?—Twopence in the shilling.

862. And that includes all charges?—That includes all charges; from twopence to twopence farthing.

863. How much is the amount per dozen?—They vary from 11*d.* to 5*s.* 7*d.*

864. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you find from your experience that from twopence to twopence farthing is an equivalent for the old rent and charges?—Yes.

865. About the same thing?—Yes.

866. *Chairman.*] And that system, you find, is more satisfactory to the men than having different charges made to them for frame rent, standing, and other things?—Very much so; I ought to say that when I first commenced this system the arrangements were twopence halfpenny in the shilling, but owing to some little trouble that occurred to me in reference to looking after winding boys, which boys I provided to wind their yarn and sweep up the shop, the men were everlastingly in the warehouse with complaints that they could not get these boys to wind, and it was my duty, in engaging with them, to work upon that principle, to see that their yarn was properly wound. I then advanced their wages so much a dozen, and agreed with them that they should pay the winders themselves, which they do now; it does not pass through my hands at all; I pay them net, and then they agree with the boy and pay him 6*d.* or 7*d.* a week for what he does for them, taking the onus off my shoulders; having a good deal of business to attend to, I could not always be looking after them.

867. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You told the Chairman you changed from the rent and charges to the net system?—Yes.

868. Why?—Because I found working on the old system that it became very corrupt, and I was determined, if possible, to establish a system that would be more congenial to the feelings of the men, and also to the satisfaction of myself.

869. Perhaps you will explain what you mean by the system having become very corrupt?—When I first commenced to work with Mr. Biggs, which I think is 29 years ago, the factories were not so numerous in Leicester as they are now; the wages were something better, and, as a natural consequence, the men were better satisfied; there was then one uniform system of what we call charges, namely, 18*d.* for a common wide frame; our frames, you must understand, are of more value then the common frame is; the charges were 18*d.* for the rent of the frame, which 18*d.* was paid to Mr. Biggs, and 18*d.* for myself for superintending and providing the men with shop room, &c.; that amounted to 3*s.*; then there was sixpence that was paid for winding, amounting to 3*s.* 6*d.*; it got from 3*s.* 6*d.*, for those common frames, I am sorry to say, to 5*s.* with some people, but I never charged it myself; the charge for rent was according to the width of the frames; the charge for superintendence being the same.

870. If a man on one of those narrow frames had earned 3*s.* 6*d.* during the week, and the charges amounted to the same sum, what was the result?—I am sorry to say that in many instances I have known that the rent has been exacted of them.

871. The whole of the money that the men had earned was exacted, was it?—Yes; holding the position I did with Mr. Biggs, it was a matter of question whether I should go to him and say, "This man has only earned 3*s.* 6*d.*; it would be hardly fair to take the rent from him for the whole week." I held at that time a large number of machines, and I many times used (to use a common phrase) to pocket the affront; I would pay Mr. Biggs the rent in order to maintain my own character rather than he should be at all suspicious of my coming one week after another and saying, "So-and-so is ill this week, and there must not be any rent paid for that frame." I invariably used to pay it myself in such cases.

872. Was that the case generally in the trade?—I am afraid not.

873. Do you speak of your own knowledge?—Yes, I do.

874. Does that same same system exist now?—Yes, it does.

875. Is the whole week's earning taken if it only amounts to the same sum as the charges?—I cannot speak positively to its being exacted in every instance.

876. Is it the general practice to do so?—I believe it is too general.

877. Then if a man is only able to pay one week the rent of his frame, and the charges run on for want of work, and he finds work the next week, and the amount of work that he then has amounts to the charges only, is the whole taken?—I fear that is too much practised, though it has not come under my own notice.

878. Mr. *Cobbett.*] It is too much practised if it is practised at all; but do you think it is extensively practised?—I cannot say.

879. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] In the net charges system which you are now working upon, the man has nothing to pay if he does no work; he has no charge, has he?—No charge.

880. Have you found that system work to the satisfaction of the men?—Perfectly so.

881. Are they happy and contented under that system?—I have never heard one single murmur from them.

882. Do you believe that the men would rather work at lower wages on that system than on higher wages on the charges system?—I do not think it would give general satisfaction for the wages to be lowered, but I think that if, for instance, 12 *s.* a week were the net amount of wages under the rent and charges system, rather than go on with that system they would be content with 11 *s.* 6 *d.*; that is, they would sacrifice 6 *d.* a week rather than resume the original system.

883. *Chairman.*] They would rather earn net earnings at 11 *s.* 6 *d.* than pay stoppage charges at 12 *s.*?—I believe they would.

884. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are there a great number of men working now upon this net system?—I believe there are in Leicester.

885. I should like to know first the number of firms working under that system, and then the probable number of men?—There is Mr. Collins for one, and Mr. Preston for another; Mr. Collins is an undertaker, and Mr. Preston a manufacturer; Mr. Mitchell, a manufacturer, and Mr. Underwood, a manufacturer.

886. Mr. *Biggs.*] Mr. Richard Mitchell is partially working under that system, is he not?—Yes, partly on that system; his frames in his factory are on that system, and those that are out of his factory, I believe, are not.

887. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Who else?—Mr. Stallard; there are several others; I cannot recollect the names just now; I was not aware I should be asked the question.

888. What proportion of the trade are working upon the net system now in Leicester?—I should think about one-eighth.

889. *Chairman.*] And seven-eighths on frame-rents system?—And seven-eighths on frame-rents system.

890. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you know anything of the value of frames?—A little.

891. Will you tell the Committee the value of a narrow frame?—That depends upon the gauge; what we call a common gauge is a 24 gauge, and they range from 15 to 50 inches wide.

892. Can you give the Committee an idea of the value of those frames?—Each respective width.

893. Yes?—From four to five pounds for a common frame, a 15-inch frame.

894. What does it require to keep such a frame in repair?—For a year, do you mean?

895. Yes; take the average of years; what would you say it would require to keep such a frame in repair?—The common width of a frame, about 55 *s.**

896. Fifty-five shillings a year?—No, not a year to repair it.*

897. I asked you about the average repair; how long will it last without being repaired?—That depends upon the hands working it.

898. The average?—The average would be about five years, I should think.

899. That would be about 12 *s.* a year?—Yes; it would be rather more than 2 *l.* 15 *s.*; about 3 *l.**

900. That would be about 12 *s.* a year on the average?—Yes.*

901. Have there been many sales of frames of late?—A great many.

902. About

* With regard to these questions (895, 896. 899, 900), there is an evident misunderstanding; the answers meant to be conveyed to the questions relative to the average amount of expenditure in repairs for a common wide frame, were, that it would require from 18 *s.* to 20 *s.* per year, incidental and other repairs.

Mr. W. Cummings.

4 May 1855.

902. About what have been the prices at which the frames have been sold?—They have varied according to the demand.

903. At about what prices have they been sold?—Many of them have been sold as low as 30 *s.* each.

904. Do you know that frames are sometimes employed for long periods without repairing?—Yes.

905. For how long?—I have worked frames myself for 11 years, without their costing a shilling for repairs.

906. Then it does not follow, that a frame will require repairing in a given number of years?—No; it depends upon the care and the skill of the workman.

907. What is the general rent-charge for a narrow frame?—A shilling a week.

908. That is the usual charge?—Yes.

909. Is there anything let for less than that?—I am not aware that manufacturers let them for less than that; frame-smiths let them for less than that.

910. But they do not let them direct to the workmen, I suppose?—They let them to the manufacturers generally.

911. And then they are re-let to the workmen?—Yes; for a shilling a week.

912. What is the difference between the price charged by the frame-smith and by the manufacturer?—About sixpence a week. A smith will let a manufacturer his frame at sixpence a week; it depends upon the terms they make, whether the rent is to be paid only when the frames are employed, or yearly, employed or not employed. If the rent is to be paid whether they are employed or not employed, he will take a little less; for instance, fivepence; and if the rent is only to be paid when they are employed, he will then charge sixpence.

913. Then the frame is re-let by the middlemen to the workmen?—Yes.

914. At an increased rent of double?—Yes.

915. Is the rent charged to the workman, whether he is in work or not?—That is what I never did myself.

916. What is the general practice?—I believe that, in some cases, if there is no employment for the frame, as a matter of course, they cannot charge a rent; but if there is employment for the frame, and only partial employment, I am afraid at times they do exact the rent.

917. Then do I understand you to say that the rent-charge is only restricted because they are unable to enforce it; is that so?—I am sorry to say it is too much the practice with many of the undertakers to dole out a small portion of work, in order to realise the profit he may expect to get from the machinery, rather than give the workmen the full scope of work that they ought to have during the week.

918. Do men retain their frames for a long series of years?—Some do; I have had several men who have been working with me for more than 20 years; and, as a matter of course, they have worked under the old as well as under the present system.

919. Is there any difference made in the rent-charge between a good frame, a middling frame, and an inferior one?—No; the rent is generally charged according to the quality of the frame, and the width and gauge of the frame.

919.* But the rent of a common narrow frame is uniform, whether it is good, bad or indifferent?—It is.

920. It is not regulated by value, but by custom?—By custom.

921. Has the amount of work done in the frame, any reference to the rent?—You are speaking now of the rent and charges system.

922. Yes; does it affect the rent?—Not at all.

923. Is the same amount taken, whether there is work or no work given out by the master?—I cannot speak as to that positively; sometimes there will be what they call half-rent; if there is a limited quantity of work given out they will take half-rent.

924. But that is not the agreement; that is done out of consideration for the workmen, I suppose?—Out of consideration for him.

925. But the custom is to demand the whole; the agreement is for the whole?—If a man came to me and took a frame when I was on the charges system, he would say, "What is the amount of the rent and charges for this frame?" I should say "so much."

926. If a frame is worked by a woman or child who will only produce half the amount of hose, is the same rent taken?—Precisely.

927. Is

927. Is frame-rent then a source of considerable profit to the owner?—I believe it is.

928. Then why does not the number of frames greatly increase?—Because employment cannot be found for the number that there are now; there is a superabundance of machinery now.

929. Then is it the interest of the middleman or hosier to employ slow instead of quick hands?—Of course it is under the charges system.

930. Why?—Because it turns in a greater amount of interest.

931. Is it customary to employ more frames than the middlemen can find work for, and to give half work, and charge full rent?—I believe it has been too long the practice. If the undertaker be Mr. A., holding 10 of Mr. B.'s frames, and if Mr. B. should, at a depressed time, see it necessary to limit the quantity of yarn to the undertaker, in order to keep his stock down, I am afraid it has been too long the practice for the undertakers, instead of limiting the quantity, to spread it over several frames, supposing that the workmen have not the chance of defending themselves.

932. Suppose workmen were industrious and thrifty, and were to save as much money as would buy their own frames, what would be the result of that; could they get work?—They would not get employment.

933. The hosiers would not give them employment?—No.

934. Then there is no encouragement whatever for a man to be thrifty, and have his own frame?—No, I do not see any.

935. Are the rents of frames higher now than they were when a larger amount was paid for the manufacture of the goods?—In my time I recollect a common frame being charged 9*d.* a week; that is some 30 years since; now a common frame is charged 1*s.*; at that time a frame was considered to be worth from 15*l.* to 18*l.*; now they are only worth from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* each.

936. If I understand you rightly, the effect of the system has been to raise the rents of frames?—Yes, it has.

937. And to lower the wages?—It has been too much the practice; whether from necessity or not, I do not know.

938. To employ slow, instead of quick hands?—Yes, as a natural consequence.

939. To encourage women and children going to the frames?—Yes.

940. To produce an over supply of goods?—There is not a doubt in my mind that it has tended to that; but I am inclined to think that any manufacturer, who would consult his own interest, would never carry on the system of rent; for I am fully persuaded that he is compelled at times very much to increase his stock when he ought to have diminished it, and merely for the sake of the rent.

941. You believe that the present system, then, is calculated to bring the workman down to the very lowest means of subsistence?—I am sorry to say it has done so.

942. Does it not even bring great numbers to the parish for relief?—Great numbers.

943. And have not the parish rates been greatly increased in consequence?—They have.

944. I have just referred you to the value of narrow frames, and the rent charged on them; can you inform the Committee the value of rents charged for wide and other descriptions of frames?—Yes; they increase in value according to their description and their width; the value of a common frame will range from 5*l.* to 20*l.*; for instance, a 15-inch frame would be worth 5*l.*, a 40-inch frame would be worth 20*l.*, and a 50-inch frame about 5*l.* more; I am confining myself now exclusively to what we call a common frame, a 24-gauge frame.

945. Mr. *Mundy.*] Is that a narrow frame?—When I use the term "common," it is a common gauge, ranging from 15 to 50 inches wide.

946. Are all those narrow frames?—No, a narrow frame is 15 inches.

947. And beyond that they are called wide frames?—Yes.

948. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Can you give the Committee a description of the various frames that are now in use?—The greater amount of frames that are now in use, I should say, range from 15 gauges up to 26 gauges, 26 included.

949. What is the next?—That is, in our locality.

950. You are speaking of Leicester?—I am speaking of Leicester.

Mr. *W. Cummings.*

4 May 1855.

951. Will you mention any other description; there are some newly invented, are there not?—Yes; the rotary frames, and what they call the circular frames.

952. Does the practice of stopping full rent, or stint, occur both in the wide and narrow frames?—It does, I fear; in some of the wide frames, in the town frames, for instance, when the market is glutted, they will limit the hands to a certain quantity of work per week.

953. Upon which is the stint most severe to the workmen, the stint on the narrow or on the broad frames?—On the narrow.

954. Much?—I should think it is.

955. Has the practice of charging full rents on stint increased or diminished of late years?—Increased, I should think.

956. Materially?—I think it has.

957. Were the system of taking rent entirely abolished, what protection would the manufacturer have that his frame was not worked by other people?—The same protection that he has now.

958. There would be no difficulty in it?—None, in my opinion.

959. Then you think those who raise that as an objection are not well founded in it?—I have not had experience. I have had for the last seven or eight years frames distributed all over the town in small quantities, working precisely on the same system as the frames in the factory, with no stoppages.

960. Did you erect several apartments in the town?—No; I have no other apartments in the town. I have the machines distributed; not having sufficient room in my own factory, I let them out to the hands.

961. Are there no stoppages for lights, and so on?—No.

962. Do you supply them with candle-light?—No; they supply themselves with candle-light.

963. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Is not a middleman a necessary adjunct to the trade, and a great assistance to the workmen, receiving the goods, giving out materials to the houses of the workmen, and taking things to the warehouse of the hosier at a distance frequently of many miles?—Yes.

964. You think it is for the benefit of the workman that there should be a middleman?—I think so; you get a more uniform quality of goods from a man of that description than you would if you had to take in the whole produce from the machines from single hands; the qualities would vary as much as the men themselves.

965. Will you state to the Committee what evils you consider arise to the workmen out of these excessive exactions of rent and charges?—They lessen their income, as a matter of course.

966. Does anything further arise out of it; has it any effect upon their education or their moral condition?—It has a very material effect upon that; it tends to degrade them very much indeed.

967. Has it any effect upon the physical condition of the people?—I think it has.

968. What effect?—It lowers it.

969. Have the operatives themselves any means of checking these exactions?—No, I am afraid they have not, particularly at depressed times. I always find at depressed times like these, that those exactions are more easily obtained and more practised than they are in good times.

970. Is there any direct connection between the hosier and the workmen; is it not all carried on by the middlemen?—Yes.

971. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say this practice affects the physical condition of the workmen?—Yes.

972. Did you not say that they are willing to take 6*d.* less a week on the net system than on the rent system?—Yes; I was then speaking of the net system; but I think the hands in my own employ, rather than resume the charges system, would be content even to have their wages reduced 6*d.* a week.

973. Then how does it improve their physical condition?—I do not say it improves their physical condition at all.

974. I thought you said that their physical condition was weakened by the other system?—It was a mistake, if I said so.

975. Is it your opinion that their physical condition is weakened by the system of rent and charges?—Yes.

976. In

976. In what respect; do they get less to support themselves with?—Yes.

977. It lowers their wages?—It does tend to lower their wages; the fact is, they never know what they have to take till they get the money in their hands.

978. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have told us that some of the manufacturers have abandoned the system of rent and charges, and adopted the net system, and you have said that that has been satisfactory both to the employers and the employed?—Yes; as far as I am concerned I can speak positively to it.

979. Can you tell me whether any manufacturer, having once adopted the net system, has returned to the rent and charges system?—I have heard of instances of that sort.

980. Do you know of them?—I do.

981. Can you give us any reasons for that change?—I cannot.

982. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is not that the case with Collins?—It has been the case with Collins, I think, more than once or twice.

983. Mr. *Gardner.*] Was the alteration made at the request of his hands?—I believe it was made at the request of part of his hands.

984. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Can you describe Mr. Collins's plan of working when he went back to the old system?—I cannot speak to that, because I have never had any conversation particularly with him on the subject.

985. Mr. *Mundy.*] Had you any conversation with his workpeople?—I do not know them.

986. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is Mr. Collins at this moment working on the system of rent and charges?—I do not know.

987. Do you know whether it was at the request of his hands that he changed?—I have heard it was.

988. But you have no idea of the motives which led to that request?—No.

989. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you read the Report of the Commissioner?—I am sorry to say that my eyes are so defective that I have not read for the last three years.

990. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say you do not know what was the inducement to the workmen to ask Mr. Collins to go back to the old system?—I do not know.

991. One effect of that system is, that little work is given to a great number of workmen; and under the net system much work is given to a few?—Yes.

992. And under the net system the active and strong workman makes a larger amount of wages than the other can?—Under the net system.

993. Is it not a very common thing, although the strongest man makes much more than a weaker man, to desire that they should have the average of earnings among them?—They, like all other workmen, look to their own interest.

994. Is it not a feeling that everybody may be subject to physical infirmity which may lessen his activity, and, upon the whole, do they not think it better that a certain amount of employment should be given to the weakly, rather than that the strong and healthy should get all the prizes?—On the rent system they would have very little to take, for they would have the same amount of rent to pay for the machine, and the superintendence, as the strong would have to pay.

995. I thought that might be a reason why they preferred a system that gave work to a great many frames, instead of confining it to a few.

996. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You gave me a list just now of several persons who worked upon the net system, and among others you said Mr. Collins?—Yes; but Mr. Biggs reminded me that he had changed.

997. Upon what system is he now working?—I am not aware.

Martis, 8° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Ingham.
Sir H. Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Cobbett.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir Joshua Walmsley.	Mr. Biggs.

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. *William Cummings* called in; and further Examined.

The *Witness*.—BEFORE my examination is continued I wish to correct an error which I committed in my evidence on Friday. I did not thoroughly understand the question which was put to me as to the average cost of the repair of machinery. I did not include incidental expenses.

Mr. *W. Cummings.*

8 May 1855.

998. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Will you describe what you mean by incidental expenses?—The incidental and other charges, I should say, would amount to from 18 *s.* to 1 *l.* per annum.

999. *Chairman.*] What description of frame are you alluding to?—The common frame.

1000. The narrow gauge?—The common gauge; the common width.

1001. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Does that include needles?—That the employer has nothing to do with; that is a part and parcel of the man's expenses.

1002. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you speak of incidental expenses, how are those expenses occasioned?—They are expenses occasioned in the factories for new screws, and so on, or if a mainspring should break; many things may occur during the year which you cannot calculate on, but they all add to the cost of the frame.

1003. *Chairman.*] You mean accidents?—Accidents.

1004. Sir *H. Halford.*] It will depend a good deal upon the care with which a frame is worked, will it not?—Of course that has a little to do with it, but those expenses are natural.

1005. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Did you see the paper which was spoken to by Mr. Biggs, in his evidence on Friday, as to the charges upon frames, and the rent and the net?—I did.

1006. Are you of opinion that that paper contains a correct statement?—I thoroughly concur in it.

1007. In your opinion, would the abolition of frame rent by the Legislature destroy private property; that is, frames held by framesmiths and others?—No, I do not think it would; framesmiths do not generally take their rent from the parties in the shape of reckoning. For instance, if I reckon with any man upon the stoppage system, I have power to stop and to exercise what power I think fit; but if I go to the framesmith, and say I wish to engage a certain number of frames, I suppose he can sue me in any court for the rent of that property. I consider that if a Bill were to pass doing away with stoppages, I should be perfectly at liberty to make a contract with any framesmith or any other individual, the men having nothing at all to do with any contract that I may make, and I should have the same power then of working those frames which I have now. I have rented independent frames, and I have paid the rent out of my own pocket, but never have I stopped a farthing rent for them from the men employed.

1008. Is a frame, when recruited, a new one comparatively, and will it work for a great number of years as well as if it were a new one?—That will depend upon the stage at which it is recruited; we consider that a frame will stand five moulds; of course they deteriorate in value as they are moulded; a frame, for instance, with

with a new inside, will go about 25 years before it is necessary to put another new inside into it; then by using the same means again, that frame becomes as valuable as it was 25 years before, and it is then capable of going 25 years more, but that generally depends upon the workman; some workmen will make a frame last longer than others; the more skilful artisan will, as a matter of course, keep his frame in a better condition than one less skilled or less careful.

1009. Many workmen, I presume, will keep their frames in condition without applying to the frameowner to repair them for many years?—Yes; many of them do, unless there is an accident which makes it requisite to have a new screw or mainspring, or things of that kind, which are unavoidable with the best of hands.

1010. If a Bill were passed by the Legislature to prevent stoppages from wages, would that, in your opinion, have a tendency to do away with the domestic trade in the villages?—I do not see that it would; I have frames of my own scattered about Leicester, in various parts, working precisely on the same system as that which this Bill seeks to establish.

1011. What would be its effect, do you think, upon the population; would it throw great numbers of them upon the poor-rates?—I do not think it would throw a great number upon the poor-rates.

1012. What, in your opinion, would be the effect of a Bill of that kind?—It would make a certain alteration, and would necessarily deter some men from taking frames; but still I do not see that it would throw a great number of people on the poor-rates; at all events it certainly could not make them in a worse condition than they are now in, for the hands at this time, I am sorry to say, are almost below starvation point.

1013. Then you concur with Mr. Biggs in the evidence he has given upon that subject?—I thoroughly concur in it.

1014. Sir *H. Halford.*] I understand you to say, that you have under your superintendence frames working in the country?—Not in the country; in Leicester, in various parts of the town; I have had them in the country, under the same system, but at present I have none; I have 25 frames scattered in various parts of the town.

1015. Besides those that are in the factory?—Besides those that are in the factory, working precisely on the same system; the system of no stoppages.

1016. Can you tell the Committee what the proportion of those who superintend is to the number of workmen?—I cannot answer that question very well.

1017. Do you think that the practice of taking frame rents, by means of stoppages from wages, has the effect of multiplying the number of middlemen?—I think it has.

1018. To any great extent?—I think that if the manufacturers were to consult their own interest it would.

1019. In that case, of course it would multiply the receivers of profits?—It would do so.

1020. How many frames do you think a middleman could effectually superintend, supposing those frames to be working in the houses of the workmen apart from the factory?—That would principally or partly depend on the distance he had to go from one house to another.

1021. But in the town, we will say?—I think he would be well able to superintend 20.

1022. I think you were acquainted with a proceeding at law that took place some years ago; you were the defendant, I believe, in a case entitled Chawner *v.* Cummings?—I was.

1023. That was an action brought, I think, in order to try the question whether the stoppage of frame rent from wages was or was not already prohibited by law, under the Act of Will. 4, commonly called the Truck Act?—I have been led to understand so since; but at that time I knew nothing at all about it; I was simply charged with unlawfully deducting from Chawner's wages 3*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*, and I defended the action; but after the trial was over I was led to understand that it was a proceeding which was instituted merely for the purpose of trying the right.

1024. That case was tried first at Leicester, I think, in the year 1844, was it not?—It was.

1025. And there a case was agreed upon which was to go to the Court of Queen's Bench, to be argued?—It was.

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1026. In that case there was no allegation that the charge which was made was exorbitant?—No, none at all.

1027. The proceeding was merely instituted in order to try the question as to the legality of the stoppage, without reference to any excessive amount of stoppage?—I believe so; I was charged with the same amount of stoppages as I had practiced for more than 20 years.

1028. The case was argued in the Court of Queen's Bench, in the year 1845, before Lord Denman and Judges Williams and Wightman?—It was.

1029. Lord Denman gave judgment in the case; do you remember what the effect of that judgment was?—The effect of the judgment was, I believe, to cause some others, besides myself, to resume another system.

1030. I have here, before me, a copy of the judgment; what I wish to advert to is this, that Lord Denman repeatedly stated, in the course of the judgment, that there was no allegation of exorbitance at all, and that for anything that appeared in the case, the charges which were made were perfectly reasonable?—He did; I perfectly recollect that.

1031. Does it occur to you, that if any extreme case had been tried, such as are to be found in the evidence given before the Commissioner, and where the charges had been manifestly exorbitant, the judgment might have been different?—I thoroughly believe it would; it would have had a different effect upon the minds of the Judges, I have no doubt.

1032. So that, in point of fact, the real defects of the system were not elicited in that case?—No, they were not.

1033. Mr. *Wickham.*] What was the effect of that judgment; was the stoppage decided to be legal or not?—I believe it was decided to be a legal stoppage; but my opinion was that I stood on very critical ground, and I therefore resolved to try if I could get, by another system, the same remunerating price for my machinery and superintendence as I had under the stoppage system; and with that view I drew up a list of prices, which I submitted to my men, and to which they readily acceded, the difference being in the amount of goods paid about 2½*d.* in the shilling.

1034. Mr. *Mundy.*] A difference in favour of which party?—The difference in the amount of price paid.

1035. Mr. *Gardner.*] Twopence-halfpenny less was paid to the workmen?—Yes.

1036. Mr. *Mundy.*] It was 2½*d.* in your favour?—No, I had no stoppages then.

1037. Mr. *Gardner.*] The 2½ *d.*, if I understand you rightly, was a recompense for the rent and stoppages which you previously took?—Yes; you must understand that then I paid for the winding; it is necessary to have in all factories a boy to wind the yarn, that being a part and parcel of the workman's own labour; but to facilitate the business boys are employed, and I took upon myself to pay all these expenses; to find shop-room, frames, superintendence, and boys to look after them.

1038. Mr. *Mundy.*] That included, in fact, all charges?—All charges. That was about eight years since.

1039. *Chairman.*] Did I not understand you to say that in your opinion the effect of such change as has been proposed, would not be to throw a great many people out of employment?—I do not think it would if the matter were fairly tested: I am willing to hope not.

1040. Mr. *Ingham.*] What do you mean by "fairly tested"?—If manufacturers were to put the workmen in bodies, and were to get a scientific superintendent to look over a number of frames, there are plenty of skilful men to be found, and they would be able then to look better after the machinery than it is looked after now; and they would be able also to look to their own interests in other respects.

1041. *Chairman.*] Are not frames frequently given out to the wives and children of the knitters?—That is a general practice.

1042. If frame rents and charges were abolished, do you think it would occur that a number of the deductions from the earnings of the framework-knitters that are now made for seaming, for winding, and other things, would cease to be made, and that that work might be done by children, who would not then have frames?—Yes.

1043. And, thereby, the head of the family would obtain a higher rate of wages with

with less deduction, as his own family would do that for which a deduction is now made from his weekly earnings?—I think that, generally speaking, in cases of that sort, the seaming and winding is done by the family of the framework-knitter; and, in a few cases, particularly in the country, there are what we call journeymen.

1044. But does not that form a portion of the shop charges that are deducted at the end of the week from the wages of the workman?—Yes, it does; the yarn is given out to the journeyman to work up; but the manufacturer expects the goods to be brought in finished; the seaming is not, in fact, part and parcel of the workman's labour.

1045. But might not a part of his family do the seaming?—Yes.

1046. And thereby save the deduction when the work is taken in to the manufacturer?—Yes; but if that stocking that wanted seaming was made by an independent journeyman, the same amount of expenses would have to be paid for the seaming of it as if one of his own family had not done it.

1047. Why; because if the family did it they would require that the deduction for seaming should not be made?—I am speaking of a stocking made by what we call an independent journeyman.

1048. Those deductions for seaming, and so on, would be saved if the man's wife and family did the seaming for him?—If his wife and family did it.

1049. I think I understood you, on Friday, to say that you had about 87 frames of your own?—Fifty-eight.

1050. There were 58 in the shop?—Fifty-eight in the shop.

1051. And you have 29 out?—Yes.

1052. Are all those 87 frames your own?—They are.

1053. You have not been in the habit of hiring independent frames of other persons, have you?—Since the trade has been bad, I have thrown up what independent frames I held.

1054. Do you happen to know anything of middlemen who are in the habit of dividing the work over a number of frames for the sake of getting the rent and charges?—I am afraid that that has been the practice for years.

1055. Is that the practice now?—No doubt; more particularly in bad times than in good; they have greater power to do it when trade is flat than when it is good.

1056. Do you work for any other house besides Messrs. Biggs?—I do not.

1057. Do you consider yourself bound to work for that house only?—I am not bound by any tie in the world.

1058. You might work for other parties, if you pleased?—I might: I am bound by no tie except the respect I have for Mr. Biggs.

1059. Do you happen to know whether independent frames are often the property of persons wholly unconnected with the trade?—Yes, they are often the property of people wholly unconnected with the trade: tailors, bakers, shoemakers, bricklayers, labourers, and frame smiths.

1060. And they get an income from the frames, which is paid by the framework knitters, entirely independent of the trade?—Altogether; that is a growing evil, in my opinion.

1061. Is that evil on the increase?—It is; I may state, perhaps, that the improvements which have been made in machinery have had the effect of throwing a great number of the narrow frames out of employ; they are laid aside by the capitalist as useless, or he sells them for what he can get for them, and they then get into the hands of such men as I have described, who by their industry have got a few pounds together, and have laid their money out in the best investment they could make; they have then sublet them to undertakers and manufacturers, and that would be the case, in my opinion, if the Bill which has been proposed were passed to-day.

1062. Mr. *Gardner*.] What would be the case?—It does not follow that that machinery would be entirely useless; those men who had a little capital would, as a matter of course, make the best investment of it they could, and that would be the only means they had of investing a small sum, so as to turn it to account.

1063. *Chairman*.] But they would not derive the same advantage if frame rents were abolished; they would be entirely then in the hands of the hosiers?—They would be then at liberty to make contracts with such persons as myself or with manufacturers; suppose I had so many frames which I wished to let at a

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certain rent, I should, under the Bill, supposing there were a Bill to prevent the stoppage of rent, be at liberty to make any contract with the manufacturers or middlemen for so many frames at such a rent per annum, but the manufacturers would not be able, I think, under the provisions of the Bill, to stop the rent.

1064. Mr. *Gardner.*] But the manufacturers would pay the workman a correspondingly less sum for his work?—He would reasonably take off from the amount paid for the goods something for the frame the workman did not have to pay the charges for.

1065. So that the result to the workman would be the same?—Supposing him to be honestly dealt with.

1066. Mr. *Wickham.*] You stated some time ago that you had what you call independent frames?—I had.

1067. Those were frames that belonged to yourself?—The frames I hold all belong to myself.

1068. You employed the workmen, and they used these frames?—Yes.

1069. And you charged them no frame rent?—I did not.

1070. What reduction in their wages did you make in consequence of giving them the use of the frames?—I do not think I made any reduction.

1071. Mr. *Ingham.*] I thought you said 2½*d.* in the shilling?—In the price paid for the goods, but in the average amount of wages it amounted to the same thing in the end.

1072. Mr. *Wickham.*] How do you get remunerated if you make no reduction in the wages to the workmen for providing those frames?—Supposing a workman under the stoppage system would average 17*s.* a week, and the goods delivered came to 17*s.*, I should under the rent system take off 3*s.* in the shape of what we call rent and charges, reducing his net amount of wages to 14*s.*

1073. When you supply your own frames, do you pay the workman 3*s.* less than you would pay if he had to pay you for the frames?—I do; but still he receives the same amount of wages net; he receives the 14*s.* the same as he would if he was working on the stoppage system.

1074. You, in fact, then get your 3*s.* for the frame?—I get it out of the price of the goods when made, instead of charging 3*s.* for rent and other stoppages.

1075. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But if the man were not working, there would then be no deduction for the rent of the frame?—No; or if, for instance, he was ill for a week or a fortnight. I have had one man, of the name of Bodycot, who had been ill for 13 weeks; he came to work only a fortnight since, and on the Saturday he had, I think, 7*s.* and odd to take, just the same as though it had been the first week of his illness.

1076. Mr. *Wickham.*] You do not, in point of fact, charge any rent when the frame has not been worked by the men?—I do not.

1077. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But according to the ordinary system of frame rents, the rent is charged whether the frame is employed or not?—That is too much the practice, I believe.

1078. *Chairman.*] And if that system had been acted on, the man to whom you have just alluded would have had 13*s.* to pay for the use of his frame during the time he was ill?—Yes; and other expenses besides. In my branch of the business we could not afford to let a man have a frame and superintendence for 1*s.* a week.

1079. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you assert positively that he would have had to pay that rent?—Not under my system.

1080. But under the other system?—I do not think that my conscience would allow me to stop it.

1081. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But is it the custom to stop it generally?—I am sadly afraid it is too much the custom.

1082. Mr. *Ingham.*] Why, then, do the workmen go to such persons?—They have no means of helping themselves.

1083. You say your conscience would not allow you to take it, and, no doubt, that is the fact; you say you believe it is taken, but that it is not universally the case that they insist on a sick man paying up all arrears during the time he could not work?—I should be sorry to think it is universally practised.

1084. In many cases, you believe, it would not be practised?—In many cases, I believe, it would not be practised; but still the present system of stoppages leaves the hands entirely in the power of their employers.

1085. *Chairman.*] And the employers have the power of doing this without the workmen having any means of redress?—Yes.

1086. Mr. *Ingham.*] Why is it that persons who do practise this extortionate mode of dealing still let their frames; why do not the workmen go to those who will treat them more honestly?—Because the workmen have not the chance of helping themselves when trade is in a bad state.

1087. Is it the fact that the demand for produce of the frames is not sufficient to give constant employment to the men who are engaged in it?—Yes, that is so.

1088. Then it is the inadequacy of the demand to the supply that causes the wages of the workmen to be, as you say they are, below starvation point?—Yes; that coupled with the extravagant charge which is made for machinery and other expenses that are put on their shoulders.

1089. But do you not say it is the want of permanent employment that induces people to submit to these extravagant charges?—Yes.

1090. Then it is the want of permanent employment that keeps the wages below starvation point?—Yes.

1091. How do you propose to raise them up from starvation point except by giving to the workmen an increased amount of employment?—It is not for me to point out a remedy.

1092. Can you suggest to the Committee any course by which you think you could get the workmen permanently employed?—A drowning man is always ready to catch at a straw, and they will take what they can get.

1093. How do you, as a sensible, experienced, and humane man, suppose it possible to raise the condition of those men who are now suffering from the inadequacy of the demand, which you say is not sufficient to produce such an amount of wages as is necessary for their maintenance, without taking some means to ensure an increase in that demand?—This is one effort that is being tried.

1094. Will not the first consequence of such a step as you contemplate, be that there will be fewer persons engaged?—There would be fewer persons engaged, but you had better have on the parish books 1,000 persons at once, than have 2,000 perpetually receiving less wages than is given to paupers in relief.

1095. Then you admit that there would be fewer persons engaged in the trade?—There would for a time, I believe.

1096. To what extent do you suppose the people who are now partially employed would have entirely to abandon their employment?—I think it would only throw out of employment the women and children, who are of very little use to the trade, except for the purpose of producing what is called the frame rent.

1097. Do they constitute one-half of the workers?—Not one-half.

1098. How many of the frames do you think are employed by women and children?—That depends entirely upon the quality and description of goods that are made.

1099. I ask you what, in your opinion, is the proportion, you having had experience in the trade?—I should think it would throw out of employment one-tenth, perhaps.

1100. Do you think that at present there is only a defalcation of one-tenth of the demand requisite to keep the whole of the framework-knitters in adequate employment?—I cannot speak to the amount of labour that is shortened at the present time.

1101. You cannot improve the demand, because that rests with the customers; you cannot compel people to buy more stockings and gloves than they want; but what I wish to know is, what proportion of the present amount of labour would be cast loose, if you only employed those men to whom the demand would give adequate constant employment?—If it threw out of employ those women and children who are now compelled to work in the frames, partly in consequence of their being able to get, perhaps, 1 *s.* or 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week more than they could at other employments, it would in time, I believe, find its level; it would put more labour, when trade a little revived, into the skilful workman's hands, and he would be better able, through a better management and a better system, to recover the little loss he would sustain of 1 *s.* or 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a head by his family being thrown out of employ.

1102. That is, supposing as many heads of families to remain employed in future as have been employed in times past?—It is; we consider that the heads of families are more skilful than their children.

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1103. Do you think that there is sufficient employment now to afford ample wages to the heads of families who are employed in framework?—Not at present.

1104. How can you expect legislation to alter the existing state of things if it cannot increase the demand?—All this Bill asks is to prohibit the stoppage of wages, which has been considered a very bad system.

1105. You say that the possession of frames is a means by which industrious persons who have saved a little capital can make that capital productive?—I was not alluding to framework-knitters; I was alluding to tailors, bricklayers, bakers, and others, who put a few pounds together to purchase frames, and think that the safest investment they can make of their little capital.

1106. It is a mode in which they employ their capital, and you think it is beneficial to these industrious persons?—But still they have nothing to do with the manufactory at all; they are apart from it.

1107. They have as much to do with it as a mortgagee has, or any one who lends his money?—They are at liberty to do it.

1108. Are you, do you think, at liberty to say, though it is legitimate for them to buy frames, that they shall make no profit upon them?—Excuse me; the evil arises from the system of investing their small capital in frames, and then letting those frames to manufacturers, who sub-let them, and who are thereby enabled to realise a profit of 50 per cent., the same as the baker, butcher, and others.

1109. That profit which you have said the manufacturer gets upon the frames indemnifies him to some extent, does it not, for the price he pays to the workman for his goods?—I do not think that the profit on the machinery has anything to do with the profit on the goods.

1110. Profit on goods is what remains after a man has paid the cost of labour, and the cost of materials, and interest upon the money employed in the business?—I am not here in the character of a manufacturer, but in the character of an undertaker; I make goods and deliver them to Mr. Biggs at certain prices, and he makes the best price he can of them.

1111. Do you think that Mr. Biggs and other persons who get a rent for their frames, make more than other capitalists do in other branches of business?—He must make more than other manufacturers who have no machinery at all.

1112. I do not understand that?—There are many manufacturers who have no frames at all.

1113. Do you mean manufacturers who have only power frames?—There are manufacturers who have no frames at all; they take them of such men as I have described, renting them from framesmiths, bakers, butchers, and others.

1114. They rent them?—They rent them at the price of 6 *d.* a week, and then sublet them to their workmen at the rent of 1 *s.*

1115. Do you think that persons who get that rent on frames which they hire and sublet, or which they own and let out to the workmen, get more profit in their business than other capitalists, who do not adopt that system, do in theirs?—It is a much easier way to get into the market, I think.

1116. Then why does not every person flock to it if it is easier, and yields better profits?—If the old system goes on, depend upon it more people will flock to it.

1117. I understood Mr. Biggs to say in his evidence, that instead of an increase there has been a gradual diminution of the number of frames; that from 40,000 they have come down to 30,000, and he says he does not believe that for 50 years a new frame has been made?—It does not follow that there should be new frames made, because there are old carcases now that can be picked up for 30 *s.* or so, that have been in existence for 100 years, and which would, in my opinion, if properly managed and a new inside put into them, last 100 years more.

1118. Do you believe it to be so profitable a business, that unless this law is passed other people will be undertaking the business of framework manufacturers?—No; it is difficult for a man to take to a business that he is very little acquainted with.

1119. Did you not say just now, that seeing the ease with which people get a profit by this use of frames, you expected that more persons would come into the trade?—No; I should much rather believe they would seize the opportunity of purchasing frames that were laid down by the manufacturers as useless in consequence of improved machinery being brought out; I think there would be more of that class of people who would seize the opportunity of purchasing those frames

frames at a low price, and then let them out to manufacturers; that is what I meant to say.

1120. You do not think there would be any increase in the amount of the employment given to the persons who work upon them?—No.

1121. And you do not see any certain means of the workmen getting better wages, unless they do get an increased amount of employment?—There is no doubt that continuing the use of the old frames would prevent to a certain extent improvements in machinery.

1122. *Chairman.*] Are not many workpeople employed without any reference whatever to the demand and supply of hosiery?—Yes, owing to some manufacturers being better able to hold stock, and having a better inclination, I believe, to go on.

1123. But without reference to the question of demand and supply, is it not the custom to give out the least possible amount of work, in order to get the frame rent and charges?—That system is practised, I believe, to a great extent in a severe time, such as the present.

1124. You believe there is a practice of stinting work, independent of demand and supply, for no other purpose than that of keeping the frames going, so as to yield rent?—That has been the practice for years.

1125. Do you not consider that that is a great evil?—A very great evil indeed.

1126. Supposing a law were passed to prevent stoppage for frame rent, do you think that that would be the cause of throwing the independent frames out of the market?—Certainly not; it might be the case to a certain extent, but not altogether; I should consider that I was perfectly at liberty, if such a Bill as that which has been suggested were to pass to-morrow, to make the best contract I could with a man who had independent frames to let.

1127. Would it not be a means of throwing out of the market a great many of the old frames?—It would.

1128. They would go out of use, because the reason for which they are used, that is, to obtain rent for them, would cease?—Yes; all those that were considered worth nothing would naturally go out of the market.

1129. Because there would be no demand for them?—Yes.

1130. Mr. *Ingham.*] But when a frame is put out of employment, the weaver who has worked at the frame is put out of bread?—Yes.

1131. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you not think that the effect of preventing the recovery of frame rents by stoppages from wages might, in some degree, be to induce the workmen to have frames of their own?—I believe it would.

1132. Is that the case at all, now?—Yes, there are a few, to my knowledge, who have frames.

1133. In that case, is any rent charged?—Yes.

1134. To what extent?—I know one or two parties in particular who are paying precisely the same price for goods as I am paying for goods of precisely the same quality, and they charge their men 3*s.* a week for rent and other stoppages, while I charge nothing; they have the advantage at Mr. Biggs's warehouse over me of 3*s.* a week each machine.

1135. I am speaking of frames which are the property of workmen?—I consider these workmen; they are not undertakers; they have not a number of frames.

1136. *Chairman.*] Are there not many weak hands and children, who, after deducting the frame rent and charges, do not earn sufficient for their bread?—Numbers of children.

1137. Mr. *Ingham.*] What would become of these children if they did not work in the frames?—There would be other employment for them; there are many branches of employment for children in Leicester.

1138. Independent of manufactures?—Not independent of manufactures; but there are various branches of the hosiery manufacture that employ more children than adults.

1139. Then you think employment would be given to those children who now work the frames?—In the course of time I think that would be the case.

1140. Then why do they not go to those other employments now?—There is one thing to be said, that they can have their little family at home, under their own eye; and perhaps they would rather have it so at present, than resort to other employments for them; for it is grievous to see some of the little children running out to work when they ought to be at school.

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1141. Is not the system of frame rents the cause of spreading the work very much, so as to make the amount of wages earned by a workman insufficient to enable him to maintain his family?—Yes; for instance, it would not suit the interest of a manufacturer, if there was no frame rent to be obtained, and if he were paying net wages, to allow these children to work the machine, because they must produce a certain quantity of goods to remunerate him for his outlay on his frames.

1142. Before a framework-knitter is employed, is there any agreement made between him and the middleman or manufacturer as to the charges, and as to what the deductions will be; does he know before he takes in his work how he stands?—It is generally understood, I think.

1143. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is there any steam power employed in the factory with which you are connected?—No.

1144. Where steam is not employed I believe the Inspectors of Factories have no control whatever?—No.

1145. What course, generally speaking, is taken to ensure order and discipline in the factories where no steam power is employed; are the workmen expected to come at regular hours and to work regularly?—No.

1146. They come just when they please?—Just when they like; they are quite independent.

1147. And, generally speaking, is good order observed, or is there a looseness of conversation, and that sort of thing, going on?—A good deal.

1148. Mr. *Gardner.*] What you propose is only a change in the system on which the wages are paid?—That is all.

1149. You do not guarantee that the workmen shall take away more earnings at the end of the week?—No.

1150. Then what advantage would a workman derive from such a change in the system as that which you contemplate?—It would give him greater satisfaction, and would be an advantage to him in the end, because at the close of the year, under the rent system, he has paid a certain amount of labour for rent at a time when the machinery was still.

1151. Do you mean to say that in effect his wages will be raised under the net system you propose?—I do not think that it would raise the price of labour.

1152. Do you mean to say that his earnings would or would not be increased?—I do not know that they would be increased.

1153. *Chairman.*] Would not the effect of such a measure be, that where now there are four frames employed in one family, and they are stinted to two or three days' work in a week, there would be, instead of those four frames, one frame for the head of the family, who would be employed six days in the week?—Yes.

1154. Mr. *Ingham.*] Then what would become of the other three people?—It would not throw the three out of employment, giving six days' labour to the one instead of four days' labour to the four.

1155. How many days' labour would the four have on the present system?—I understood the Chairman to put it in this way: instead of there being work given for the four frames sufficient to carry them for six days, there was only sufficient to carry the four frames four days.

1156. *Chairman.*] Suppose there are three frames, and two days' work are given out for each frame, that would be only six days' work for one frame?—Yes.

1157. And if six days' work for one frame were given out then, instead of having to pay frame rent for three frames there would be only frame rent for one?—Yes.

1158. Mr. *Ingham.*] What would the other two persons do?—It is a matter of very little consequence what is done with them, if there is the same amount of money coming into the same family on the Saturday night.

1159. *Chairman.*] With less frame rent paid?—With less frame rent paid.

1160. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do I understand you to say that you know cases in which workmen, not undertakers, use frames of their own, and yet are charged frame rent when they settle with the manufacturer?—No, I do not know of such cases, but I have heard of such cases as a poundage being charged by manufacturers to workmen working on their own property; the manufacturers have said, "I cannot employ these frames of yours unless you allow me a poundage."

1161. They do not exactly charge frame rent?—No; they charge a poundage.

1162. But you do not know any instances of that kind yourself?—Yes, I do.

1163. Mr.

1163. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why are those exactions submitted to by the workmen?—In consequence of their having less power than they had, owing to the depression of trade.

1164. Owing to the superabundance of labour, in fact?—Yes.

1165. In your opinion, would the abolition of frame rents by Act of Parliament diminish that superabundance of labour?—It would tend to give more regular employment to a certain number of workmen.

1166. Are you aware that Mr. John Biggs, a gentleman of great experience, said that the first result of such a measure would be to throw out of employment 10,000 frames out of 30,000?—Yes; but I think he meant it would throw the useless frames out of employment; he was supposing then that these frames would be of no value; but such men as I have been describing would seize the opportunity of purchasing these frames, and they would then come into the trade as fresh as ever.

1167. These are his remarks, "The only difficulty is this, that there would be, unquestionably, a stage of suffering in society; there are, perhaps, 30,000 narrow frames, and 10,000 wide frames; of the 30,000 narrow frames, 10,000, probably, would be in the hands of women, children, and old men; and the probability is, that in the change those persons would not be employed, and would be thrown out of work." Do you agree in that observation of Mr. Biggs?—To a certain extent that would be the case, no doubt.

1168. The superabundance of labour would be increased rather than diminished, would it not?—I think they might just as well be out of work altogether as be living in the state of starvation in which they now are. I do assure you it is my humble opinion that if the system I have established now, and practised for the last eight years, were seriously tried and well tested, there are very few manufacturers, I will almost venture to say not one, or men either, who, in the next eight years, would have cause to repent it.

1169. Many people would say that nothing could permanently raise the wages of the persons employed in the hosiery trade, unless you could bring about some means of causing a greater consumption of stockings, or unless you could compel the consumers to pay a higher price for them; now the Act which you propose to have passed would have neither of those effects, would it?—I do not think it would; I do not think it would have anything at all to do with it.

1170. I understand you to have said, that the prohibition of frame rents by Act of Parliament, would not interfere with frames which are scattered about in villages?—I do not think it would.

1171. Have you any scattered about in villages?—No; but I have in various parts of the town of Leicester.

1172. They are, to a considerable extent, under your own eye?—I have a mile, perhaps, or two miles to go, before I could visit the whole of them.

1173. Are there any instances of the net system being carried out, in the case of frames that are scattered about in villages?—I am not aware of it.

1174. It has never been carried out yet, with respect to them?—I have not heard that it has, except in one instance of my own; I had three frames in the country which I worked upon the same system for two years.

1175. Suppose the circumstances of your business called upon you to employ frames scattered about in villages round Leicester, would you have any objection to adopt the net system as to them?—Not the least.

1176. Do you think there would be no risk of your frame being employed on some other person's work?—I think there would be no more risk than there is under the rent system of that frame being worn out by manufacturing goods for other people.

1177. But, under the rent system, it is a matter of very little importance?—Then they must purchase the machinery for the mere sake of the rent that is obtained for it, if it is a matter of indifference to them whether it is employed on their manufacture or not.

1178. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] If such practices were resorted to, would not the manufacturer be able to check them at the end of the week?—Yes; I believe the system pretty generally adopted by manufacturers is to deliver out a certain quantity of yarn; for instance, if a frame will produce four dozens of stockings a week he will weigh out 14 lbs. of yarn, the dozen stockings being about 3½ lbs. in weight; and if the workman does not bring in that 14 lbs., the full 14 lbs. is not given out next time.

1179. Has the owner of the frame any summary process by which he can

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obtain possession of his frame if it be not worked rightly?—If he thinks he is not honestly dealt with he can have it back.

1180. *Chairman.*] Do you think that if the undertaker were to be paid by the hosier, either according to the quantity of work or by an annual salary, that would be more advantageous both to the hosier and to the framework-knitter?—It would be a simpler mode of payment, and more satisfactory, I think.

1181. That is, if he were paid in the same way as a bailiff is paid who is employed in agricultural pursuits?—Precisely so.

1182. That would be more simple?—Yes.

1183. And I think you say more satisfactory?—Yes.

1184. And there would be fewer deductions and less bitterness between the manufacturer and the framework-knitter, would there not?—Yes; I believe it would create mutual friendship between the employer and the employed.

1185. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have you any idea how the system of deductions first originated?—That goes beyond my experience.

1186. Mr. *Mundy.*] How long do you say you have adopted the net system?—About eight years.

1187. Is it on the increase among other masters besides Mr. Biggs and yourself?—In the branch of the trade that I am connected with it has been on the increase rather than otherwise; the question was asked me on Friday, and I said one-eighth, but I take the question as one of general principle.

1188. Did you confine your observation to Leicester?—Yes.

1189. You think the system is not on the increase in the country villages?—I know there is one factory in Leicestershire, at Kibworth, that goes upon the net system, but that is the only one I do know of.

1190. *Chairman.*] Who is the manufacturer there?—I do not know.

1191. Mr. *Mundy.*] You have told us that women and children will, you think, be thrown out of employment by the contemplated change; do the women and children work the frames in the same way that the men do?—Yes.

1192. Might they not be employed as winders?—Yes; it might make a difference in the receipt of money at the week's end of from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per head for a time until they got thoroughly initiated in the branch that they were so employed in; but then I think the head of the family, his wife, himself, and one son, working among them three frames, would have it, perhaps, in his power, through the extra quantity of work he would be able to do himself, to make up the little loss he would sustain by the other frames being still.

1193. In fact, then, there would be no diminution in the amount received by the family?—No, very little.

1194. Although there would be a diminution in the amount of the frame rent?—Yes.

Mr. *Thomas Collins,* called in; and Examined.

Mr. *Thomas Collins.*

1195. *Chairman.*] I THINK you are a manufacturer in Leicester?—Yes.

1196. In what branch of manufacture are you engaged?—In the hosiery manufacture.

1197. What number of frames are you employing?—When all of them are employed, about 150.

1198. Are they in shops, or do the knitters work at them in their own houses?—I have 106 in one factory.

1199. Have you 150 frames in employment now?—No, from the flatness of the trade they are not all employed at this time.

1200. How many are you employing now?—About 50.

1201. Then two-thirds of your frames are not employed?—No.

1202. And how many of those that are in your factories are employed?—I think there are 29; I think only 30 of them are fit for work. I had a misfortune some time ago; my factory caught fire, and stopped 82 frames.

1203. You have only 29 working in your factory?—About 29.

1204. You have 21 others, which are employed in other parts?—Yes, I cannot say to a frame or two; the number of frames is altogether about 50 now.

1205. Twenty-nine are employed in your factory, and the other 20 are employed somewhere else?—Yes.

1206. Are they employed in private houses?—Yes.

1207. Are all your frames worked upon the same system, or do you adopt different

different systems with different workmen?—The frames in the factory are all on one system.

1208. And what is the system adopted for those frames which are not in the factory?—I have two different systems for them; some we rent, and some we do not; it depends upon the trade; when trade is flat, they do not pay rent, and when trade is good, they do pay rent; I leave it entirely with them; they do as they please about that.

1209. They do as they please?—Yes; I am not particular about it whether they pay rent or not.

1210. Is it upon the net system then that your factory frames are worked?—Yes.

1211. And with regard to those which are not in the factory, some pay rent and some do not; is that so?—Yes.

1212. What is the system that you pursue with those frames that are not in the factory; those frames I mean that do not pay rent?—I charge them so much in the shilling.

1213. A poundage?—A poundage.

1214. How much in the shilling do you charge?—Two-pence halfpenny.

1215. And in the factory, I suppose, you keep to your regular rule, the net system?—Yes, in the factory.

1216. And you give to the workmen who employ the other frames in their houses, the option of either paying rent, or having that deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the shilling made from the wages for their work?—Yes.

1217. Which of the three systems do you find the most popular among your working people?—I have tried both ways; sometimes my hands have liked to pay rent best; and then they have altered their minds, and wanted to be paid net prices; so I have indulged them, and have let them in those cases do as they please; in the factory at the present time they all work upon the net system.

1218. But with respect to those frames which are not in the factories, what system do you pursue?—Some pay so much in the shilling, and some pay the rent.

1219. Do they do that now?—Yes.

1220. Mr. *Gardner.*] Some prefer the stoppage system while others prefer the net system; that is what I understand you to say?—Yes.

1221. Mr. *Mundy.*] Which do you find most profitable to yourself?—I know which I like best, and I know which the hands like the best in the end; they like the net system the best.

1222. And you like it the best?—Decidedly best.

1223. Do you consider that it is the most remunerative to yourself?—No, I do not think I gain or lose anything by it; but I gain one thing, the hands are kept to regular time; they work regularly, and they get regular net wages every week, and besides that, they feel much better at the week's end; on the rent system you cannot compel a man to come to work when you want him; he comes when he pleases.

1224. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Under the net system do you have a better class of hands?—Yes, a great deal better.

1225. You have said some prefer the one system and some the other; but I presume you meant to say that the larger number of workmen approve of the net system?—They do.

1226. Would any of the men go to the rent and charge system if they could work upon the net system?—A great many men do not like to be confined to the house; stocking men have been their own masters for many years, and they do not like to have any restriction put upon them; there are a great many who would not work upon the net system if they could get work even at a less price under the charges system, because under the charges system they can be at home, and do as they please.

1227. That would apply to the worst and the idle hands?—Yes.

1228. Is it desirable to encourage the idle and worst hands?—No, I should say not.

1229. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do the industrious hands prefer the stoppage or the net system?—I have both good and bad in my factory; I am obliged to have both sorts; the good hands like the net system the best; I make a difference between the good and bad hands in my factory; I have tried it all ways; the good hands say, "We like the net system very well, but we find we have to draw the idle and

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the bad hands up the hill"; and they say, "Master, we should like to have this altered"; I say, "How is this to be done? make a proposition to me, and then, if I think it right, I will agree"; they did so, and said, "We know what about the rent of the machinery ought to be; we are good quick hands, and when we have done a certain quantity of work we think we ought to have an extra price for our labour"; I said then, "Well, but what am I to do with the bad hands?" they said, "If they do not earn a certain quantity of money, they ought to be paid so much less;" and we agreed upon that principle, which we have acted upon, and which works extremely well; they are all satisfied with it.

1230. Mr. *Ingham.*] You pay the inferior hands a less price for the work they do?—The best hands receive a larger price than the inferior hands.

1231. But to those who turn less work out of hand you give a less price for that which they do turn out than you give to the others?—Yes, if they do not earn a certain sum; if they earn a certain sum then they have the full price.

1232. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is not that a stoppage from the wages of the idle man?—No; it is regularly understood.

1233. But is it not, in point of fact, a stoppage of wages to that extent?—I do not consider it so.

1234. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Instead of being a stoppage from the wages of the idle man it is rather a bounty given to the industrious man, is it not?—That is what I mean; it has been done by my hands' own wish; it has not been from my own wish; it is what they have brought about themselves, and it gives general satisfaction.

1235. Do you think it possible to extend the principle of net wages to the satisfaction and to the benefit of the manufacturers, and at the same time to give general satisfaction to the workmen?—I do.

1236. *Chairman.*] How long have you been engaged in the trade?—Thirty-four years.

1237. Sir *H. Halford.*] Your frames are, I think, on a particular principle?—Yes.

1238. On what they call the rotary principle?—Yes.

1239. Has that principle an advantage in competition with the common frames?—Yes.

1240. Are those frames employed in the houses of the workmen at all?—I have a few very good hands; men that I can depend upon; and they have asked, as a favour, that they might be allowed to have these frames at home for their accommodation, and I have allowed it, but it is not a general rule.

1241. Those frames are more expensive than the others, are they not?—They are a very expensive class of machinery.

1242. *Chairman.*] Has your system been always the same since you have been in the trade?—No.

1243. The old system, I imagine, was the frame-rent system?—Yes.

1244. That, I suppose, was your system first entirely?—Yes, for many years.

1245. How long is it since you altered your system to the net system?—I think about 10 or 11 years, but I cannot say to a year.

1246. But for about 20 years you went on, did you not, with the frame-rent system?—Yes.

1247. You then altered it to the net system, and from that time you have gone on on the same system that you are going on upon now?—No, we have altered it once or twice, I believe; I think we have altered twice; first it was rent, and then net wages; I have indulged my men in every way I could; there was a great outcry made some 10 or 12 years ago, when the case occurred that Mr. Cummings was asked about, and which was brought before the House; and I commenced net wages, but afterwards the workmen thought they should like to go back to the rent system.

1248. The different systems that you have acted on you have adopted, I think you say, entirely at the wish of those you employ?—No; at the first outset of my adopting the principle of net wages, I took it upon myself.

1249. Did you change then to the net system entirely from the frame-rent system?—From the frame-rent system I went to the net system.

1250. And are your men well employed on the net system?—Yes.

1251. How long is it since you have given them the option between renting frames and the poundage system; because you adopt three systems, as I understand?—I believe the poundage system has commenced within the last six months with the frames that are not in the factory.

1252. Was

1252. Was that system adopted in compliance with the wish of the framework-knitters?—It was done for the accommodation of both the men and myself; within the last six months trade has been very flat; I could not find full work for the hands, and to take the rent was very awkward; for if a man worked only three days in the week, he would say, "Master, what am I to pay; I have only worked three days in the week?" I should, perhaps, contend that he had worked three days and a half instead of three, and that he ought to pay the rent; that would cause a little dispute. I therefore said that the best way would be to take so much off in the shilling; the workmen all agreed to that, and that is the reason why we have adopted this plan.

1253. Your alteration of the frame-rent was at the suggestion and request of the workpeople?—Yes.

1254. You changed about 10 or 11 years ago from the rent to the net system?—Yes.

1255. And your alteration again to the frame-rent system was for the convenience of, or was to be at the option of your workpeople?—I think they went on the net system three or four years, and then they thought they should like to go back to the rent and charges system.

1256. Then it was at their request, and was not your own doing, that you went back to the rent and charges system?—Yes; the reason why I did it was this: the good hands found they were injured by these net wages; they had to draw a line, so that my machinery should pay me about the same as if they had paid rent for the use of it; the more work a hand does the more rent he has to pay; the less work he does the less rent he pays; so that the more work a man did the more he suffered, the less work he did the more he gained; they thought, then, that they should like to go back to the rent system, and they went on the rent system, and continued so for a year or two; and then they thought they should like to go back to net wages again, and that is what we are on now, and what I always intend to keep on, for I intend to go back to rent no more to please anybody.

1257. You do not intend to consult their convenience any more, but to take a line of your own?—I do; and the line I have drawn now gives great satisfaction; it is, in fact, their own line. We go on very pleasantly; when the hands earn a certain sum of money, according to the machine they work in, and my machines are all expensive, though some are more so than others, and on the rent system those machines paid more rent than others; the greater the value of the machine the more money a hand gets on his machine weekly, and then I give an extra price for his work; and if, as I said before, an indifferent or idle hand does not do so much work, I pay him so much less. The good hands do not suffer for the bad ones.

1258. Mr. *Gardner.*] You said just now, in answering my question, that the industrious and good hands preferred the net system; whereas in your reply just now to the Chairman you make use of this expression, "The good hands found they were injured by these net wages"?—I did say so.

1259. I cannot reconcile those two statements, because they are opposed the one to the other; you told me that the industrious and good hands preferred the net system, but in reply to a question put to you by the Chairman, you used these words, "Good hands found they were injured by these net wages"?—They all preferred the net system at the beginning.

1260. Mr. *Mundy.*] I think I understood you to say that the good hands found that under this system they were obliged to drag the bad hands up the hill?—Yes; and I said, that to obviate that difficulty, I proposed that after they had earned a certain sum of money they should have an extra price for the work, whether they were good hands or bad; but that if they did not earn a certain sum of money they should have a less price for their work; that was their own proposal.

1261. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you understand the system of working, as it is at present carried on in the narrow frames, under which rent and charges are taken?—Yes.

1262. What is the rent charged for what is called a narrow frame?—A shilling a week, I believe, for a common narrow frame.

1263. Is it let by the week or by the year?—By the week.

1264. Is the same rent charged for a good narrow frame as is charged for a middling or inferior frame?—I think there is no difference made in that respect.

1265. Then the rent of frames is uniform?—A shilling a week.

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1266. It is not regulated by the value of the frame, but by custom, I presume? —Narrow frames all pay one rent; it does not matter about the value of them.

1267. It is regulated by custom then?—Yes.

1268. Has the amount of work given out by the employer to the framework-knitter any influence upon the amount of rent charged; or, in other words, does the amount of rent depend upon the amount of work given out to the workman? —No.

1269. It is charged if he has half work then?—When a man brings his work in they take the rent for the whole week; there are some good-meaning men, however, I am proud to say, who would say, "We will allow this to be taken off if the man has been sick and unable to work."

1270. What is the principle; is it to deduct a whole week's rent whether the man has had only half work, or perhaps less?—That is not what I was intending to answer. If a man has only half a week's work given out to him, I could not say they would take the whole week's rent; I could not say that that is done; it may be the custom, but it is what I never did, though I believe it has been done.

1271. You have said that you have a knowledge of this description of employment, and I was asking you whether your knowledge extended to this; whether they took frame rents when work was not given out to the full amount of a week or not?—I believe that many do take that rent; it is not generally the case, but it is the practice with many.

1272. Supposing the machine to be worked by a woman or a child, is the rent still the same?—The same rent is paid.

1273. Whether they bring home one dozen or three dozens, still there is the same rent charged?—Yes.

1274. Is the number of frames on the increase or decrease?—I should say there are very few new frames made now; there have been a few in the last 10 years, but not many; I am speaking of common machinery; there is no increase in that machinery.

1275. Is it the interest of the middleman owning frames to employ a slow hand rather than a quick hand, when he is obtaining rent for his frames of 1*s.* a week each?—I should say that in a bad trade a slow hand is the best for his purpose.

1276. Why?—Because he pays his rent.

1277. *Chairman.*] And does less work?—Yes.

1278. Is it customary to employ more frames than the middleman can find work for, and to give half work and to charge full rent?—I believe that has been the system to a great extent.

1279. If a workman was thrifty, and having saved money bought a frame of his own, would he obtain employment from the middlemen?—He would not, unless trade was very good.

1280. He would have to go without employment?—Yes.

1281. You perhaps heard a question put some time ago to the last witness to this effect: Do I understand you to say you know many instances in which men own and work their own frames, and yet are charged rent by the hosier, although he does not find the frame?—I have heard speak of that many times as being the case, and I believe it is the case. I can recollect some years ago I was working for a hosier in Leicester, and he said, "Well, Mr. Collins, trade is very flat; we cannot employ this machine of yours unless you pay us rent." I said, "For my own machinery?" He said, "Yes." I said, "I can never do that. I would get a cart and pitch my machinery into the Cut first." I believe those were the very words I used to the party at the time; he said he was receiving rent then for frames that belonged to the parties who worked them for him.

1282. Mr. *Ingham.*] He gave way when you spoke to him in the spirited way you have described, did he not?—He smiled at me.

1283. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] He admired your independence?—I believe he did.

1284. Are frame rents higher now than they were some years ago?—When I first knew the trade, that is about 45 years ago, the rent was 8*d.* and 9*d.*, and now it is 1*s.*

1285. Frame rents being higher now than they were then, how are the prices of goods compared with what they were at the period you speak of?—They are a good deal lower than they were when I went into the trade.

1286. Frame rents are higher, and the price of goods is lower, so that it presses still

still more heavily upon the workmen?—Yes; I should like to make one remark. Although frames pay 1*s.* a week now, I do not think they pay a better interest than they did formerly, when they paid 9*d.*

1287. Why?—Formerly the wages were higher, and the hands were more careful over the machine than they are now; when I first knew the trade, if a man had a frame he was very proud of it; he kept it clean and used it well, but now it is quite altered; if a man gets a good frame he does not care what becomes of it, and in two years it will want repairing; when I knew the trade first I have known them go for five or six or seven years without requiring repair; and I should decidedly say that at that time the frames paid better at 9*d.* than they do now at 1*s.*

1288. Then, as far as I understand from your replies to questions that have been put to you, the effect of the present system of rents and charges has been to raise rents?—Yes.

1289. And it has also been to lower wages?—Wages have been gradually lowered; I am speaking now of these narrow frames.

1290. Has it also been the means of employing slow instead of quick hands?—Yes.

1291. And of putting women and children to the frames rather than the best hands?—It is a great advantage to the hosier to get the narrow frames into the country; for instance, take the case of a man and his wife; in a few years they get a family, and as the children grow up they are put to the frame; they wind and seam, or do something; in time the man gets three or four children; each frame used pays a shilling a week rent, whether a boy or a man works it.

1292. The result of that is to produce a great deal more labour than employment can be found for, is it not?—Yes.

1293. Is it not, in your opinion, desirable that those children should be employed in other occupations rather than be brought up to the frame?—Decidedly; if frames in large numbers got together in factories and shops, and the children went to work in the factories, they would be brought up much better than they are now, and would be kept to habits of order.

1294. If you had the opportunity, you would adopt generally the factory system?—Certainly.

1295. That system being calculated to employ the better rather than the worse hands, and to give good wages to good men?—Yes, it would be the greatest blessing to the workmen if they had to work in factories; it would be a means of establishing one price for labour.

1296. And you see no difficulty in carrying out that system?—No.

1297. Then you would be in favour of a legislative enactment for that purpose?—Decidedly.

1298. Do you believe that it will ever be adopted without legislative interference?—I believe it will come to it in time; it is coming to it very fast as it is, but it would be much better, I think, if an Act of Parliament were to bring it to it at once.

1299. When you say it would come to it in time, what length of time do you suppose?—I should think 10 years.

1300. You think that in 10 years it will come to it itself if we let it alone?—Yes, I do.

1301. But that is only problematical; it is not certain?—No.

1302. So long as men can get exorbitant rents it will not take place?—No.

1303. *Chairman.*] I understand you to say, that the interest of money invested in frames is not greater now than it was many years ago?—No.

1304. And you say that the price of manufactured goods is lower, and the frame rent is higher?—Yes.

1305. Is there not a great difference in the value of frames?—Yes.

1306. Between the present value of them and their value many years ago?—Yes, there is quite a different class of machinery used now.

1307. Thirty years ago, what was about the average value of a narrow frame? When I first knew the trade, and was apprenticed to it, there were new frames made, and I remember the price then was 12 guineas and 13 guineas a frame.

1308. And for that 9*d.* a week was the price charged for rent?—Yes.

1309–10. What is the worth of a frame of the same description now?—You might get one built now for 10 guineas, perhaps.

1311. A new one?—Yes.

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1312. But there are no new frames made now, are there?—Not of that width.

1313. What can the carcase of an old frame be bought for now?—They can be bought at different prices; the price depends on who wants to sell them; if a party has a number of frames to sell, he will hold them till he can get the best customer; he may make five or six or six or seven pounds for good frames.

1314. Do you not get a higher rate of interest for your money if you get a shilling a week for a frame costing five or six pounds, than you do if you get 9 *d.* for a frame costing 12 *l.* or 13 *l.*?—Yes; but if I wanted a new machine I should not give 10 or 12 guineas for it, I should buy an old one in good condition for five or six pounds.

1315. We have understood that no new frames, or scarcely any, have been made within the memory of man?—Yes; I can remember many having been made about 40 years ago.

1316. You may buy frames for four or five pounds apiece, may you not?—Yes; and they have been bought for less.

1317. Do you not get better interest for your money if you can buy frames at four or five pounds apiece, and have a shilling a week rent for them, than if you buy frames at 12 *l.* or 13 *l.*, and receive 9 *d.*?—Yes.

1318. I understood you to say, that the interest on the outlay of capital in frames is not at all greater now than it was formerly?—I was speaking of the cost of the machinery if you had to build new machinery; but if you can buy a frame for five pounds that is worth ten, that of course makes the interest better.

1319. I see your name is attached to a petition which was presented to the House of Commons last Session, praying that stoppages in the payment of wages in the hosiery trade might be abolished by Act of Parliament?—Yes.

1320. That petition contains an allegation, "that the custom of exacting payment for the hire of frames and other charges, by reductions from wages, from the facility with which such deductions are made, renders the charges arbitrary and uncertain, and in many instances of excessive amount;" is that your opinion?—It is.

1321. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have been speaking of the cost of frames; there has been a paper spoken to by Mr. Biggs to this effect: he purchases five frames for 5 *l.* each, and he works then for five years; they want repairs at the end of five years; he then expends 22 *l.* 10 *s.* upon them, which puts them again in perfect repair, and enables them to work for five years more; at the end of those five years he expends another 22 *l.* 10 *s.* upon them, and they are then again for five years more in good order, and at the end of that period he expends another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, and they are still in good repair for five years more. Now, the cost of the frame and the charges for those three times repairing amounts to 92 *l.* 10 *s.*; that is the entire cost including the cost of the frame; he says the earnings in the first five years for the five frames at 1 *s.* a week would be 71 *l.* 5 *s.*, for the second five years 71 *l.* 5 *s.*, and so on for the four periods, the total amounting to 285 *l.* 10 *s.*; he then says he deducts 92 *l.* 10 *s.*, the cost of the frame and the repairs for the whole period, from the 285 *l.* 10 *s.*, the amount he has received in rent, and finds that he is in pocket 192 *l.* 10 *s.* for an expenditure in the first place of 25 *l.*: I want you to look at that paper, and say whether you concur in that statement?—I quite understand the whole of what you have said without looking at the paper, and I believe there is no exaggeration in the paper at all; it is neither under-done nor over-done; I should say that, if anything, the cost of the machines is over-done. At the expiration of the 20 years the inside of the machine would be completely lost, and there would be nothing left but the carcase; it would then want a new inside put to it.

1322. And then the expenditure of another 22 *l.* 10 *s.* would repair it?—Yes.

1323. So that he gets 195 *l.* at the end of the period for an expenditure of 25 *l.*?—Yes.

1324. You say you concur in that statement?—Yes; the statement is quite correct.

1325. *Chairman.*] I understand you to say, that although there is a higher rent charged now for the frames than there was formerly, the charge having been raised to 1 *s.* from 9 *d.*, yet in your opinion the additional expense of keeping the frames in repair would account for the interest obtained for the money expended being less now than it was formerly?—Yes; they did not cost so much then.

1326. There is not so good interest obtained now, as the cost of keeping the frames in repair is greater than it was before?—That is what I mean.

1327. Lord

1327. Lord *J. Manners.*] You say that formerly the workpeople used to look kindly on their frames and treat them as friends; but that now they illtreat them, and seem to regard them as if they were enemies; can you explain what has occasioned that change of feeling?—I think I can.

1328. Do so, if you please?—Wages were higher and hands were more satisfied formerly than they are now; they had not to work as many hours, and they were getting money with more ease than they do now; as the wages gradually got down the hands became more dissatisfied, and they lost the pride they used to take in their machines.

1329. To put it shortly, you would say that the relations between employers and employed were formerly more satisfactory than they are now?—Yes.

1330. Do you think that if a change, such as that which you advocate, were to take place, the relations between employers and employed would be again put on a more satisfactory footing?—On the net system, I do.

1331. Therefore you think it would be to the interest of the employers, and that such a change would be highly beneficial to the workmen?—Yes; I believe it would bring about quite a change in the stocking-making trade altogether, and the stockingmakers would rally and take a pride in themselves.

1332. *Chairman.*] And there would exist a greater degree of friendship between them and their employers than exists at present?—Yes, I think so.

1333. Lord *J. Manners.*] In the days you speak of, did the children ever receive anything like an education?—I believe they received about the same sort of education that they do now.

1334. I am afraid that is very little?—Very little.

1335. If a change, such as that which you advocate, took place, would there be, do you think, more means of educating the children of the workmen?—Yes; I believe the parents would work more regularly, and get a better price for their labour, and that the younger branches of the family would go to school; at present they are all obliged to stop at home to work at the low prices.

1336. There would not be in the case supposed the same inducement to employ children that there is now, would there?—It would better the condition of the people in this way, that if the net system came into operation the frames would be got together in large numbers, and the father would go out to work, and perhaps one or two of the elder children would go with him, but the younger ones would go to school; and the man with his two or three children would get as much as half a dozen children and the wife together at home.

1337. Mr. *Mundy.*] At what age do they put children to work?—At four, five, six, and seven years of age, and there they keep them.

1338. What age are those children who do the work of a man?—They begin at nine, ten, and eleven, and some as early as eight, if they are stout and tall.

1339. I think you said you did not employ many of the narrow frames; that yours were the superior class of frames?—Yes, mine are generally the superior class of machinery.

1340. What rent do you take for rotary frames?—They are all net wages.

1341. What is the original prime cost of a rotary frame?—It depends upon the width; they run from a guinea to 27*s.* or 28*s.* an inch; they are built by the inch.

1342. And what is the value of a frame of that sort?—A guinea an inch, or from that to 28*s*, an inch; the width commands the price.

1343. Mr. *Gardner.*] How are the frames in your factory worked?—By power, the greater part of them; there are 20 that are worked by hand, but they still work on the rotary principle.

1344. There is no inducement to anybody to make use of the stoppage system with power?—No, I have tried it both ways.

1345. You do not require an Act of Parliament to induce you, as a man of business, to adopt the net system in the case of frames that are worked by power?—No, I do it without that.

1346. Your own sense of convenience and profit induces you, as a business man, to adopt it voluntarily?—Yes; some years ago it was said it was not legal to take these rents and charges, and it was a good deal of trouble, and so at last I did away with it altogether.

1347. When you introduced power?—Before I introduced power; years before that.

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1348. Is not the gradual improvement which is taking place in machinery making a revolution in the trade?—Yes.

1349. Quite independent of any Act of Parliament?—Yes.

1350. Mr. *Ingham.*] You said that in those early times of which you have spoken, when men treated their frames carefully, they were receiving better wages than they are now?—Yes, their wages were double what they are now; I can give an instance, if you will allow me; when I went apprentice, I worked perhaps on the largest machine in existence; I think it was nine inches wide; I then made socks, and received 2*s.* 9*d.* a dozen for them, and now for the very same sock, I believe, they pay only 11*d.*

1351. What has led to that great declension in price?—I suppose there have been more goods made than there is a demand for; I suppose that is the cause of it.

1352. How were these socks made; were they made by hand frames or by power?—It was before there were power frames; there was a flatness in the trade in 1817, 1819, 1822, and 1823, before power machines were introduced.

1353. Had there been any increase in the number of hand-machines at that time?—No.

1354. But there had been a great increase in the population of the country, had there not?—Yes.

1355. How came there to be more stockings made than were wanted if the number of machines was not increased, and the customers were?—I am not able to answer that question.

1356. Did they not get supplied with hose in another way?—They manufactured stockings in Germany for a good many years.

1357. In truth, then, the public were supplied from other quarters?—I should say they were.

1358. And it was that that led to the fall in wages, was it not?—I should say so; that is my opinion.

1359. Can you permanently benefit a journeyman working at a frame except by raising his wages?—No.

1360. How can you raise his wages, unless you prohibit or prevent any extra supply flowing into the market from other sources?—The net system would raise the workman's wages.

1361. How?—If the net system were adopted, the machines would be brought together in large factories, and the men being together in bodies would demand a larger price for their labour.

1362. They would strike and get a better price?—Yes; but now they give them what price they choose; a man with three or four children, sooner than part with his frame, would let his whole family work the whole week for 16*s.* when he might get the whole of that 16*s.* himself under the net system.

1363. Your object is not so much to get rid of the rent as to get rid of frames?—I want to see men better paid for their labour.

1364. You say you think the men would obtain a better price for their labour, if, instead of being scattered all round the country, they were brought within the walls of one factory, where they might combine together?—Yes; I say, if there were 20 men together, or from that to 40 or 50, they would get a better price for their labour than they get at present.

1365. Do you propose that they should work at all kinds of frames, or on improved looms only?—That would make no difference.

1366. The net system would be very much better for themselves, you say?—Much better.

1367. Would it not be a very good thing to encourage them to unite together, for the purpose of getting it generally adopted?—Yes.

1368. And any measure that would give protection to the capital contributed by these men, and enable them to associate together, and purchase their own frames, would be doing the very thing you wish to be done, would it not?—Yes; but you would have a great deal to do to persuade them to do it, for they would say, "No, I am my own master; I will do as I like, I will work when I like, and play when I like, and be under no man's control."

1369. You think they are not sensible enough to see their own interest?—I am sure they are not.

1370. Would you have an Act of Parliament passed to compel men to do that which is most to their own interest, or would you not rather educate them so as

to

to enable them to perceive what is to their own interest?—I certainly hold with education.

1371. Would you not rather see the men so far instructed as to be able themselves to see and act on what is to their own interest, than treat them like babies, and say, "We will pass an Act of Parliament, and force you to do that which is to your interest"?—All my hands would say it is best for the men to be brought into factories; they know they get a better price for their labour, and they would get more if the system were general.

1372. They live in the town, do they not, and are at large and among their companions and fellow-workmen?—Yes.

1373. When the other workmen see how these men are thriving in the world, what is to prevent them from following their example?—They will follow it in time.

1374. I think you say they will do so in 10 years; do you not undervalue the force of your own example?—I wish it would be the case next week.

1375. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have been asked whether it would not, in your opinion, be better to provide that the children of the workmen should be educated, rather than apply for an Act of Parliament to enforce the adoption of any particular system, by which wages might be improved. I think you said a short time ago that children are employed at the ages of five, six, seven, eight, and so on?—Six I would say.

1376. In seaming and winding?—Yes.

1377. What wages per day do the children obtain when they are so employed?—Perhaps a child of six years of age would earn 2 *d.* or 3 *d.* a day.

1378. So long as the system of employing these children in winding and other things is continued, do you think that parents, generally, will send them to school?—I should say that a child would earn 3 *d.* a day at seaming; the father and mother take that, of course.

1379. My object is to know from you whether, in your opinion, it is at all probable that the parents of these children would send them to school, so long as they could be employed at six, seven, or eight years of age, earning so much a day?—They cannot afford to send them to school on the present system.

1380. Therefore there is no chance of their being better educated?—No; but if the system of net wages were adopted, there would be a chance of it, because the husband, in that case, would get as much as he himself, his children, and his wife get altogether, and then the younger children would be sent to school.

1381. He would save by not having to pay rent for the extra frames; he is now obliged to employ as much as would send his children to school?——

1382. Mr. *Ingham.*] Who, in that case would do the winding and seaming?—Boys and girls of 10 or 11 years of age.

1383. Then they would not be allowed to go to school?—I am not allowed to have any one under 13 years of age in the factory.

1384. Then would it not seem reasonable to prohibit people from employing those very young children?—They are not allowed to do it in factories.

1385. Lord *J. Manners.*] You would propose to bring these factories under the operation of the Factory Acts?—The net wages would bring it to the factory system; it would affect it in this way: I think that if a man, with one or two of his eldest children, could get as much as the whole family can now get, he would not let the younger ones work so early; he would send them to school.

1386. Is there necessarily a winder and a seamer to each frame?—No.

1387. They are merely there to fit up the proper quantity of hose?—Yes.

1388. Your view is, that by the net system one person would be able to turn out as many dozens as four people do under the present system?—No.

1389. I thought you said so?—No.

1390. You said that, under the net system, one person could turn out as much work as it takes his whole family to do under the rent system?—No; I said that if the net system were established, a man with one or two of his elder children would get as much as the whole family now gets; they would be better paid for their labour.

1391. How would the manufacturer be able to give them a better price for their labour?—They would not do the work unless he paid them a better price for their labour; the public would have to pay more, but they would not feel it; it would make no difference to the public.

1392. Do you not think that some of those Germans you have spoken of, who

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flooded the market with hosiery formerly, would come in and flood you again?—We can soon satisfy them; we have improved machinery which will settle them.

1393. You say that according to this net system you would pay more for the goods that you received from your workmen, and that you would indemnify yourself by charging more to the public?—That is my meaning.

1394. Then if any one works upon the present system of getting his goods manufactured at a less price, and gets about the same price from the public that you are getting, he would be making greater profits than you are making?—But he would not be allowed to go on the old system; he could not charge his rent.

1395. Do you think that this law should be made to affect every place where hosiery is produced?—I do not suppose it would affect Germany.

1396. Then if so, would not the Germans come in with a greater quantity and supply the gap?—I believe the small amount per dozen that would be required to make the hands comfortable and happy would not allow Germans to interfere with us; the class of goods they have been making the last few years has been an inferior class of goods.

1397. You think they would not be tempted with a small amount of profit to come in?—The workpeople would want so small an amount of allowance that it would never be felt; we will say a halfpenny per dozen, a halfpenny on 24 stockings; that would make a very great advance to the workmen in the class of goods you are alluding to.

1398. What is your profit on a dozen stockings; I dare say it is very little?—We have no profit at all; I do not reckon on profit; I do not sell my goods at all; I make them all for the trade; I only manufacture goods; I do not sell them.

1399. But you sell them to hosiers?—No, I do not; I make for them.

1400. They pay you?—Yes.

1401. What profit—I will not say you, but what profit do other persons in your own situation expect to get upon a dozen pairs of stockings when they sell them?—I do not know; I know my own business, but not that of other persons.

1402. What would the public pay for those stockings, as to which you say a halfpenny a dozen would make all the difference in wages?—Perhaps they will get them now for 6*d.* or 5*d.* a pair.

1403. I thought that very likely you did not get 2*d.* profit upon the same quantity?—No, there are not profits got like that; but, as I said before, I do not sell them. As to what profit the hosiers get I do not know; that is not my business; the workpeople do not care what they get if they themselves get fair wages.

1404. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Nothing has been said about the amount of wages, for that is a question regulated by supply and demand; but you have said, "fair wages," and therefore I am induced to ask you this question. Can you tell us the present wages in the various departments of the trade at this moment, and compare the system of net charges with that of the gross charges?—There is a variety of different classes of goods made; I could not say what every hand would get on every branch, but generally; I will commence with the narrow frame.

1405. You are not upon the net system now?—Do you mean paying rent?

1406. Yes?—I should say that with the rent, seaming, and winding taken off, a first-rate workman would not earn more than seven or eight shillings a week.

1407. That is what a first-rate workman would earn, employed how many hours a day?—He works what hours he pleases; there are many who profess to work 16 or 17 hours a day, but I do not think they do that; they may work 12 hours a day; they often will not begin to work till Wednesday, or perhaps Thursday, and the rest of the week they will begin at four in the morning, and work till 10 at night.

1408. Upon an average, how many hours a day do the men work?—I should say, on an average, ten hours a day for six days in the week. I am speaking now of good hands.

1409. What would a woman or an unskilled hand, a slow hand, or a child, or a good big boy earn?—Some women will get as much as a man; 5*s.* or 6*s*, if she is a good skilful woman; and an active boy or girl would get as much as a man.

1410. Now leave the narrow frame department on the charges system, and tell us what the workmen get under the other system; that is, the net system of working, in factories where good hands alone are employed?—I can speak for myself; I can say that my hands, good hands, active girls and women, will get 10*s.*, 11*s.*, and 12*s.* a week clear money.

1411. *Chairman.*]

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1411. *Chairman.*] Under your net system?—I am speaking of the best of my hands.

1412. On the net system in the factory?—Yes; they will take that amount of money away from me; they will take that money away on Saturday night.

1413. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I understand you to say that skilled workmen would get double the wages under the net system, and in a factory working regular hours, that they would get, under the frame rent and charges system, working ten hours a day and six days in the week?—Yes.

1414. That is the way in which you propose to improve the wages of the workmen, and not by increasing the price of goods?—The hands would advance the wages themselves, because when they got in bodies they would not be crushed down as they are now.

1415. You have pointed out that the men can get double the wages under the factory system and the net system that they can get under the frame-charges system, working with narrow frames; that is, that they can get double the wages, employing the same frames?—No, I did not say so.

1416. Then it is a different frame that they would be employed in to get double the wages?—I can only speak to my own factory; there are very few establishments, I am sorry to say, in which the net system is acted on; if there were more, the hands would be better off.

1417. Sir *H. Halford.*] I should like to understand what you mean by the factory system; you mean a system without charges, do you not?—I do.

1418. You do not call the employment of stocking-makers in middlemen's shops, subject to charges, the factory system?—No.

1419. You mean a net system?—A net system; my hands commence at six in the morning and work till six at night, and in the winter season they work from seven in the morning till seven at night.

1420. You have spoken of different qualities of frames, some good, some bad, and some indifferent; is that difference exhibited in the quality of the work, or in the facility with which it is produced?—As Mr. Biggs stated in his evidence, a frame will bear moulding four times; that frame is as good a machine to work on after the fourth mould as after the first mould, although the machine would not be so valuable to sell.

1421. The work produced will be as good, and the facility of producing it will be the same, but the machine will then be in a state of decay?—That is what I mean to say.

Mr. *George Buckby*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *G. Buckby.*

1422. *Chairman.*] WHAT is your occupation?—I am a framework-knitter by trade.

1423. How long have you been in that trade?—More than 30 years.

1424. In what sort of work have you been employed?—I have been employed in nearly all sorts of work: socks, gloves, hose, shirts, ladies' polkas, and almost everything that has been made.

1425. Have you been a journeyman hiring your frame?—When I first became a frameworker I served for eight years as an apprentice: since that time I have been a journeyman, and have had a frame or two on my own premises.

1426. And what frame rent have you been paying?—The rent has been according to the width of the frame, and the sort of work that I have been doing.

1427. What has been the rent that you have been paying for the frame that you have been working?—The frame that I worked lately has been charged under a sort of indirect system of net contract; but previous to that (it was at the time that Mr. Biggs altered his system from nominal to net contracts, or poundage, for his frames) I worked under one of the middlemen who worked for Mr. Biggs, and this middleman's system was 1½*d.* in each 1*s.* that we earned.

1428. What sort of work have you been employed in?—Of late, cravats, ladies' polkas, shirts, and so on.

1429. Has it not been the custom in the trade to make certain stoppages from the earnings of the operatives for frame rents and charges?—Yes.

1430. Do not the operatives complain that they are subjected to hardship in consequence of those stoppages being made from their earnings?—Very much so.

1431. Do those complaints arise principally from the existence of the present system of rent and charges, or from the mode in which those charges are exacted?—I believe

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—I believe they arise from both; the workmen generally believe, that having regard to the amount of capital invested in the sort of machinery in which we work, the rent charged is too high. But their greatest complaint, I believe, is against the mode in which the stoppages are taken.

1432. Can you mention to the Committee any particular instances of hardship which have occurred, and which you would attribute to the stoppage system?—Yes.

1433. Will you have the goodness to state any that are within your knowledge?—We know that there are men who have had to pay full rent and charges for three or four days work in the week, and that there are others who have had to pay frame rent during the time they have been ill and unable to work; that has happened to a great extent. It is a general complaint among the workmen that they have to pay full rent and charges when they have been only partially employed.

1434. When they earn only a small amount of wages, they pay the same rent and charges as they would pay if they were earning full wages?—Just the same.

1435. Does the practice of exacting full rent from the frame, and stinting the employment, occur more with the narrow or with the wide frames?—I believe it occurs more with the wide frames than with the narrow; that is, there are greater exactions made from persons working in the wide frames than there are from persons working in the narrow frames.

1436. The rents are higher in the wide frames than in the narrow?—Yes.

1437. What is the usual rent of the wide frames?—They vary, according to the width, from about 1*s.* 6*d.* up to about 3*s.* 6*d.*

1438. Are those rents fixed by the will of the employer, or is there any agreement between the frame-work knitter and his employer about the rent?—It is a general understanding, when a person goes to work a frame of a certain width; there is a system in the shop, when there are a number of persons working, by which they know what the amount of rent and charges will be; but at the same time, when they begin to work, they are not certain that they will have a week's work to do.

1439. They are certain, however, what they will have to pay?—Yes, they are certain of that.

1440. Although they are not certain what they will have to receive?—No, there are a great many different systems pursued by the middlemen; and I verily believe that with some of the manufacturers (of course there are honourable exceptions), there is a system of putting off the men. When the men want to go to work on a Monday morning, they will go to a middleman, especially when trade is flat, and they want to begin work, and the middleman will say, "I have not yet been to the warehouse; call again after dinner;" and then when a man calls again after dinner, the middleman will say, "Well, I could not get waited on, call again in the morning." All that time the day's charges have been going on. The next day perhaps the same thing will happen. The man goes in the morning, and is told to call again at dinner time; and then very likely when at last he does get the material, he finds he wants "tops," or something of that kind, and so more time is lost.

1441. The effect of all that is to prevent the operative from beginning his work?—Yes.

1442. And during the whole of that time the rent and charges are going on?—Yes, they are going on the whole time. That is usually the case, though there are exceptions to that as a general rule.

1443. Has the practice of deducting full rent and charges upon partial employment increased or otherwise during the last few years?—It has decidedly increased. When first I became a journeyman, after I had served my apprenticeship, I remember the master with whom I worked would not at any time take charges when there was nothing for the workmen to do; he would in that case take off a day's charges; but it was more general then to take a little off when a man was still for a day or for a few hours than it is now.

1444. There is a greater disposition now to exact the full rent and charges than there used to be?—A very great deal more so, I believe.

1445. Does the practice of making these stoppages upon short work exist with the middlemen only?—No, there are exceptions; some of the manufacturers, I believe, would not exact the full rent in such cases, while there are others who do;

do; but the middlemen are the persons, I believe, who deduct more heavily than the manufacturers themselves do.

1446. Then you think the difficulty is in coming to fair terms with the middlemen rather than with the manufacturers?—Decidedly.

1447. When employment is scanty, have the operatives any means of preventing these deductions from being made?—No, none at all; they have no means whatever of preventing their being made; and if they were to apply to the Poor Law Board when they have only half work, when a reduction is made on their wages, or when nothing of that sort occurs, the Poor Law Board would not interfere at all if they could get work at any price.

1448. Mr. *Wickham.*] When you say that the Poor Law Board would not interfere, do you mean that they would not be able to get parish relief?—Yes, they would not give them relief.

1449. *Chairman.*] Are the rates for frame rents and other charges uniform, or do they vary in amount?—They vary.

1450. Do they vary with different employers?—Yes; different middlemen will make different deductions.

1451. The difference is not made so much by the manufacturers themselves as by the middlemen?—No, I think not.

1452. Do you know any hosiers who have adopted the system of net contracts?—Yes, there are several in the town who have done it.

1453. Will you name some of them?—Perhaps I cannot call to mind their names at the moment; there is Stallard, and Mr. Cummings for Mr. Biggs, and I believe Mr. Collins is on that system now in his factory; there are others, but I cannot recollect their names at this moment.

1454. Is the general rule to take frame rents, or do they adopt the net system?—The general rule is, to take frame rents and other deductions.

1455. Have you had any experience in the working of net contracts?—Yes, I have; I have worked with a middleman under net contracts, and I have had a frame at home on my own premises under the net contract system, and had it some time; and I worked with a middleman some time under the net contract system.

1456. What is the mode of carrying on the business on that system?—It is very simple and very plain.

1457. What is that paper which you have in your hands?—It is a statement of net contracts and charges agreed to by the manufacturers and middlemen and the workmen, when the system was first commenced, about eight or nine years ago; unfortunately, the paper is not dated, but I think it was about eight or nine years ago. The system was this: in the nominal contracts, when we were under the system of paying rents and charges for 125 leads in hand, the price of the hand was 1 *s.* 11 ½*d.* This is a machine that makes the hand of a glove; and the other, the fingering, was 42 leads in the finger; that is another machine that attaches the fingers to the hands; that is 42 leads for 2 *s.* 11 *d.* Now the total price of that glove is 5 *s.* 7 *d.*; but you must understand that besides that, there is the stitching or seaming, or whatever it may be. Now 5 *s.* 7 *d.* was the nominal rate when the charges were deducted. It was then agreed to have a system of net wages, and for the same quantity of leads (125) we received 1 *s.* 7 *d.*

1458. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] In lieu of what?—In lieu of 1 *s.* 11½ *d.*, and then for the 42 leads in the finger, we received, in lieu of 2 *s.* 11 *d.*, 2 *s.* 2¾ *d.*, making the total price of the whole glove (per dozen) 3 *s.* 8¾ *d.* Now, this was agreed to between the middlemen, the manufacturers, and the workmen; and for the stitching, I believe, to the best of my recollection, there was 4 *d.* in the shilling taken off from the 5 *s.* 7 *d.* There was 4 *d.*, as near as we can come to it, taken off in the shilling to remunerate for the wear and tear of the machinery, for the trouble of the middlemen, and for the stitching of the article. I think that about three halfpence farthing would be about the average amount of the stitching, or not quite so much, and that would leave about twopence farthing to be deducted from the wages of the workmen, and manufacturers and middlemen, for the wear and tear of the machinery.

[*The Witness handed in the following Paper:*]

STATEMENT of Prices for Lisle Thread Gloves.

3-Needle List, with Charges and Stitching.

Jacks in Hand.	Price of Hand.	Jacks in Finger.	Price of Finger.	Total Price.
	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
82	1 11½	27	2 11	5 7
80	1 10½	26	2 9½	5 4
77	1 9¼	25	2 8	5 1
74	1 8¼	24	2 6½	4 10
72	1 7¼	23	2 4¾	4 7
69	1 6¼	22	2 3	4 4
66	1 5	21	2 1¾	4 1
64	1 4¼	20	1 10¾	3 9
61	1 3	19	1 9½	3 6
58	1 2½	18	1 8¼	3 4
55	1 1¾	17	1 7¼	3 2
53	1 1	16	1 6¼	3 –
50	1 –¼	15	1 5½	2 10
48	– 11½	14	1 4¼	2 8
45	– 10¾	13	1 3	2 6

3-Needle List, without Charges or Stitching.

Jacks in Hand.	Price of Hand.	Jacks in Finger.	Price of Finger.	Total Price.
	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
82	1 6	27	2 2¾	3 8¾
80	1 5	26	2 1½	3 6½
77	1 4¼	25	2 –½	3 4¾
74	1 3½	24	1 11¼	3 2¾
72	1 2¾	23	1 10	3 –¾
69	1 2¼	22	1 8½	2 10¾
66	1 1	21	1 7	2 8
64	1 –¼	20	1 5½	2 5¾
61	– 11½	19	1 4¼	2 3¾
58	– 11	18	1 3½	2 2½
55	– 10½	17	1 2¾	2 1¼
53	– 10	16	1 2	2 –
50	– 9¼	15	1 1¼	1 10½
48	– 8¾	14	1 –¼	1 9
45	– 8¼	13	– 11½	1 7¾

The above price to be paid to the hander and fingerer.

2-Needle List, with Charges and Stitching.

Leads in Hand.	Price of Hand.	Leads in Finger.	Price of Finger.	Total Price.
	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
125	1 11½	42	2 11	5 7
121	1 10½	40	2 9½	5 4
117	1 9½	39	2 8	5 1
113	1 8¼	38	2 6½	4 10
109	1 7¼	36	2 4¾	4 7
105	1 6¼	35	2 3¼	4 4
101	1 5¼	34	2 1½	4 1
97	1 4¼	33	2 –	3 10
93	1 3	31	1 10½	3 7
89	1 2¼	30	1 9½	3 5
85	1 1¾	28	1 8¼	3 3
81	1 1	27	1 7¼	3 1
77	1 –¼	26	1 6¼	2 11
73	– 11½	25	1 5¼	2 9
69	– 10¾	23	1 4¼	2 7
65	– 10¼	22	1 3	2 5
61	– 9½	21	1 2	2 3
57	– 8¾	19	1 1	2 1
53	– 8	18	1 –	1 11
49	– 7¾	17	– 11¼	1 10

2-Needle List, without Charges and Stitching.

Leads in Hand.	Price of Hand.	Leads in Finger.	Price of Finger.	Total Price.
	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
125	1 6	42	2 2¾	3 8¾
121	1 5½	40	2 1½	3 6¾
117	1 4¼	39	2 –½	3 4¾
113	1 3½	38	1 11¾	3 2¾
109	1 2¾	36	1 10	3 –¾
105	1 2	35	1 8¾	2 10¾
101	1 1¼	34	1 7½	2 8¾
97	1 –¼	33	1 6½	2 6¾
93	– 11½	31	1 5¼	2 4¾
89	– 11	30	1 4½	2 3¼
85	– 10½	28	1 3½	2 2
81	– 10	27	1 2¾	2 –¾
77	– 9¼	26	1 2	1 11¼
73	– 8¾	25	1 1¼	1 10
69	– 8¼	23	1 –½	1 8¾
65	– 7¾	22	– 11½	1 7¼
61	– 7¼	21	– 10¾	1 6
57	– 6¾	19	– 10	1 4¾
53	– 6¼	18	– 9¼	1 3½
49	– 6	17	– 8¾	1 2¾

Extras with Charges.

Black Cotton, 6 *d.* extra on all above 58 Jacks; the three next sizes under 58 Jacks, 5 *d.* extra; and 4 *d.* all below.

For 2-Needlework, 6 *d.* extra for Black Cotton on all above 85 Leads, 5 *d.* on the three next sizes under 85 Leads, and 4 *d.* all below.

Brown Linen Thread, 6 *d.*; if coloured, 9 *d.* extra; if black and white be worked together, and the black constitute the ground, it must in all cases be the same price as all black.

Extras without Charges.

Black Cotton, 5 *d.* extra on all above 58 Jacks, 4 *d.* on the three next sizes under 58 Jacks, and 3 *d.* all below.

For 2-Needle work, 5 *d.* extra on all above 85 Leads, 4 *d.* on the three next sizes under, and 3 *d.* all below.

Brown Linen Thread, 5 *d.*; if coloured, 8 *d.* extra; if black and white be worked together, and the black constitute the ground, it must in all cases be the same price as all black.

If the Glove be seamed all through, 6 *d.* extra on all above 58 Jacks in the 3-Needlework, 5 *d.* extra on the three next sizes under 58 Jacks, and 4 *d.* all below.

For 2-Needlework, if the Glove be seamed all through, 6 *d.* extra on all above 85 Leads, 5 *d.* on the three next sizes under, and 4 *d.* all below.

Seamed Hands and Little Fingers on each sort of work 3 *d.* extra; and, for Doubling, 2 *d.* per dozen extra up to 100 No., and 3 *d.* all above.

1459. You say that that statement which you have just handed in was agreed to by the masters, the middlemen, and the workmen?—Yes.

1460. How long was it acted on?—A long time; I cannot say how long.

1461. For some years?—I believe it was.

1462. Why was it discontinued?—The principal reason, I believe, why it was discontinued was this: There were some middlemen, who, after the system was adopted, did not at all like net wages being paid to the workmen, and they in consequence of that did all they could to put it down when trade became rather depressed, or anything of that kind, and when they asked for work, it did not signify to them at all what the amount of a man's earnings was. They would take the same charges if a man made only 1*s.* 6*d.* a dozen as they would if he made 5*s.* 6*d.* So they went to the warehouses and asked for this work at something less, and by-and-by there was such a competition with the middlemen that some of the people in the factories, on account of this system not being general, were obliged to follow in the same destructive course, and either reduce their workmen or adopt another plan. I believe that is the principal reason why it was not carried out. I believe that the middlemen were at the bottom of it.

1463. You say there was such competition with the middlemen; what do you mean by that?—Competition for the charges. When this system came into operation it did away with some of these middlemen, and the frames were collected together in larger numbers; and that being the case, these other middlemen that were then thrown out from taking these rents and charges began to compete with those who had the frames the first opportunity they had.

1464. If the middlemen were competing among themselves, one would fancy that the result of that would be that the workmen would be better off?—Not in that case, because they were competing for a system that the workmen detested; they were competing against a pure system, as we called it, for a system that was very impure and destructive in its tendency.

1465. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is the paper which you have put in the result of a general agreement, which was come to in the trade?—It was general; but the Committee will understand that there are two systems; the manufacturers who went on the charge system adopted the one side of this statement, and those who went on the system of net contracts adopted the other.

1466. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Is that table or arrangement between the manufacturers and the workmen referred to in the Commissioners' Report?—I think not; I think it was adopted after the report was made.

1467. Lord *J. Manners.*] When you speak of the competition of the middlemen, do you mean that they went to the masters and offered their frames to them on lower terms than those they had been before in the habit of receiving?—Yes, in order that those persons who had lost their frames, and some of whom had gone into the factory, might get some frames again, so that they might have the chance of getting under the stoppage system, and taking money from the men whether they earn it or not, or, no matter what amount of rent, in order that they might get under the system of having the privilege of stopping wages from the workmen, they went and offered to do the work at anything they could get.

1468. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Do you mean that they went to the manufacturer and tempted him to give them work, by offering to take it at a lower rate?—Yes.

1469. *Chairman.*] Do you think that the system shown in this table is a reasonable adjustment of the expenses necessarily incurred in carrying on the trade?—I do.

1470. You say that some of the middlemen did not like it, and that they broke down the whole system?—No, it brought in a variety of systems; for instance, one middleman would say, "This is a time of flat trade; work is rather short, but I will allow you to earn 10*s.*, 12*s.*, or 14*s.*," as the case might be, per week. What was generally paid was 3*s.* 7*d.* a week, the 7*d.* being for the winding. When this 10*s.*, 12*s.*, or 14*s.* a week was allowed, the full charges would be deducted. Then this has occurred not once or twice only, but several times, and with more than one or two men. They would say, "Now, if you think proper, you may earn another shilling or two, but if you do, you must give me another 3*d.* in the shilling," so that in fact you must only have 9*d.* out of the shilling you earn; that was one system. Then there was another system, "I will take 3*d.* in the shilling out of every shilling you earn;" and in point of fact a variety of systems were brought about, through the competition of the middlemen on this occasion.

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1471. Do I understand you to say, that the middleman being the connecting link between the manufacturers and the workmen, it was their not agreeing to it that broke up the system?—I believe that was the cause of it; I believe that the system would have been more adopted if all the middlemen had taken up the question with the workmen. If they had done so, I believe that that system would have been generally carried out; I am speaking now with reference to the glove branch; I do not know that it would have been the case with respect to other branches; I do not know that anybody had attempted it at that time, but I think that if the majority of the middlemen had agreed with the journeymen at that time, the system would have been carried out generally.

1472. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] The result of the system which you now speak of, and which you say has broken down, has so far resulted in good, that it has introduced the factory system and net charges in the case of some manufacturers?—Yes.

1473. *Chairman.*] Do you believe that the change from the system of the stoppage of wages to the system of net contracts would be injurious or otherwise to the fair-dealing manufacturer and middleman?—I believe it would be a benefit to both, inasmuch as they would have a clear conscience, and I consider that that is a benefit to any honest-dealing man. He would have a clear conscience, that when he reckoned with his men on the Saturday, he had only done what was fair, and that if his journeyman had earned 2*s.* he had got it; but under the other system, I cannot see, for the life of me, how a man's conscience can be at rest when, if he only employs a man for two, or three, or even for five days, he takes the whole six days' charges.

1474. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] The Chairman, when he put his last question to you, did not intend, I apprehend, to ask you anything about a man's conscience, but whether beneficial results, in a money point of view, would or would not, in your opinion, follow from the adoption of such a system as that to which his question referred?—I believe that it would be a benefit to the workman in the way I have already described; that is to say, instead of my receiving as a workman 3*s.* per dozen for anything that I might make under the stoppage system, I agree with the middleman to say, "Instead of your paying me on the old system 3*s.* a dozen, you shall now give me 2*s.* 9*d.* clear money; take off 3*d.* as an equivalent for rent and charges, and for your trouble, and so on." The benefit that I should receive in that case would be, that if I did a dozen stockings, or gloves, or socks, or shirts, at 2*s.* 9*d.*, according to my agreement, I should have the whole of that 2*s.* 9*d.*; whereas, if I did them under the stoppage system, I should only get a shilling, and perhaps not that, so that that would be a benefit to me in that case. The benefit to the employer I do not suppose would be very great in that isolated case, but still we contend, as workmen, that if we have only one dozen of anything to make, we ought only to pay in proportion to the amount of work that we do; if we only do one dozen instead of three, we only wear one-third of the machinery which we should do if we had three dozen to make; so that we consider we only ought to pay according to the time that the machine is worked.

1475. *Chairman.*] Besides being of advantage in point of money, as between the manufacturer and the workman, would it not have this benefit also, that it would produce a more friendly feeling between the manufacturer and the workman?—Decidedly so; for instance, in the shop I work in, when we have anything to do, when Mr. Biggs adopted his system of a penny in the shilling for each shilling's worth of work that was taken into the warehouse, our master adopted the system of taking three-halfpence in the shilling; but still this system would neither be perfect or pure, because another middleman, who worked under Mr. Biggs, went home and adopted a system, I think, of 2¼*d.* in the shilling; and another wanted to adopt the system of 3*d.* in the shilling; there might be persons come in and say, "I will have 5*d.* out of the shilling;" and we think that would be almost as bad as taking the rents and charges.

1476. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But it would only be on the absolute amount of work done; it would not be so bad as the rent and charges when you are paying rent and have no work?—No, not in that case; but what I mean is, it would be open to abuses, and there would be no regularity in it; some might say, "I will have a penny," others 2*d.*, some 3*d.*, and some perhaps 6*d.* out of the shilling.

1477. *Chairman.*] Are there any employers who are now adopting the poundage system?—Yes, I believe there are; I believe there is one who adopts it, but

but I think it is only adopted partially; I think Mr. Mills, a glove manufacturer, adopts the poundage system.

1478. Do you believe that the poundage system would be a beneficial substitute for the present rent and charges system?—I do not think it would be altogether so beneficial as net contracts; I believe that some would want 2*s.* in the pound, where others would want only one; there is a question whether some would not want 3*s.*

1479. There would be more inequality under the poundage system than under the net system?—I believe there would. I will give you an instance. There was a person who had worked under the rent system for a manufacturer; they wanted to stop from him 15*s.* out of 25*s.* worth of work taken into the warehouse; the man had paid such enormous rents, that he began to complain about it to the manufacturer; he told him that he had made so many complaints, and he did not seem to take any notice of them, that he had come to the resolution at last that he would not pay. This was a middleman with several frames; he said, "I told him I would not pay such enormous rents any longer, and then he took only 7*s.* 6*d.* out of the 25*s.* net rent;" and then they agreed after this that a sort of poundage should be paid; and he said, "Well, I had rather pay poundage; I would rather give so much in the shilling or so much in the pound out of what work I bring in, than be subject to these enormous stoppages;" and he said, "What shall it be?" The manufacturer replied, "It shall be 2*s.* in the pound. The man said, "That is too much." "Oh, but" (said he) "they are paying 1*s.* 8*d.*" The manufacturer referred to some house where he knew they were paying 1*s.* 8*d.* "Yes," said the man, "I have no objection to pay 1*s.* 8*d.*," but he pays 2*s.* at this hour.

1480. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] A system of poundage, then, you think would be unsatisfactory to the workmen?—I believe it would, unless it was uniform.

1481. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say that possibly some middlemen might exact 2*d.*, 3*d.*, and as much as 5*d.* or 6*d.*?—Yes.

1482. What should induce any knitter to go to a middleman who exacted 6*d.*, when another only took 3*d.*?—They cannot all be at the good places.

1483. Is it not the fact that there are more of you than there is work for?—That is decidedly the case, at certain seasons of the year; it is decidedly the case at the present time that there is not a sufficient demand for the work of frame-work-knitters; and this system (the stoppage system) has been one of the great causes of the over-abundance of machinery, and its being placed in the market.

1484. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Explain that, if you please?—For the sake of the frame rents and other charges, middlemen or contractors have been in the habit of teaching women and children, who, perhaps, for the first year do not produce (I will not vouch for its being correct as to the number they will produce the first year or two; I only put it as a supposition) more than one dozen pairs of stockings a week on the average. These men, when there is a sort of brisk trade, as we call it, or when plenty of goods are wanted, not producing a sufficient amount, and the manufacturer wanting more goods, the middleman is again induced to put somebody else into the frame; he knows that he shall have his 1*s.* a week for the rent and so on, and for his trouble in bringing it out, and all that; this is one cause why the trade has been overrun in the manner it is; they can buy a machine for from 2*l.* up to 3*l.* 10*s.*, and from that up to 4*l.*, and in some cases even for less. Now this inducement, on account of being able to stop the rent out of what the men earn, has led the middlemen to speculate still further, and to bring more women and children into the trade, in order that they may get these rents and charges.

1485. Can more than one person work in a frame at a time?—Not at once.

1486. Do you know of any new frames being made within your time?—Not one.

1487. Then, in fact, the inducement is not so much to introduce fresh people into the trade as to keep the existing frames in employment?—There has always been an over-abundance of independent machinery ever since I can remember.

1488. There has not been, then, any increase in the opportunities of employing these persons, but they have merely been induced to keep more machines going than the demands of the trade would justify?—Than there is any legitimate occasion for.

1489. Then either a certain proportion of these frames must be destroyed and

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rendered entirely useless, or else there must be such a demand for the articles they produce as to give them all full occupation?—Yes; perhaps there may come a time when there will be a greater demand; it is not, perhaps, more than two years ago since there was scarcely a narrow frame in Leicester or Leicestershire that was not employed.

1490. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Do you mean employed full time?—Yes, full time.

1491. Mr. *Ingham.*] When there was such a state of trade as that, there would be no occasion for any changes of the law, I suppose?—Yes, there would.

1492. Why?—Because we do not hold with the stoppages even when we have plenty of work.

1493. But so far as the frame rent may be an inducement to people to keep on frames at half work, that would be rectified, of course, by full employment?—To a certain extent it would.

1494. You say it is not unfrequently the case that they will go for work on Monday morning and then be told that there are no tops ready, and so they will be put off till Tuesday morning, when something of the same kind will again occur, so that, in the result, they only get the work on the Wednesday?—That is often the case.

1495. That must have been at a time, must it not, when there was not work enough to be done in Leicester to give the workmen six days' employment?—Yes; that is the case.

1496. Then how can you remedy that?—We do not attempt to say that we will make anybody find us full employment; all we want is, that we shall only pay rent for the machine for the time we work in it.

1497. I think you said that, in some instance you mentioned, a person wished to get from a middleman 2*s.* when the middleman only got 1*s.* 8*d.* from the hosier?—No; you mistook me; I said that the person whom I referred to had been paying rents, and wished to be put upon the poundage system, and the manufacturer said it should be 2*s.* in the pound, and he said, "No, that was too much." "Well," said the manufacturer, "they are paying 1*s.* 8*d.*," meaning somebody else was, and that he must have 2*s.*

1498. That was what the manufacturer received from the middleman?—This was what the manufacturer agreed to take as poundage from the middleman, in lieu of the rent which he had been taking.

1499. Did the manufacturer take rent from the middleman?—Yes.

1500. Then the manufacturer said he would take, instead of the usual frame rent, 2*s.* in the pound as an equivalent for the frame rent?—To pay himself for the frame rent.

1501. Instead of taking frame rent from the middleman, he deducted 2*s.* in the pound from the price of the goods which the middleman furnished to him?—Yes.

1502. Is not that another means merely of increasing the profit made by the manufacturer?—Yes; but then it would not increase the profit of the manufacturer so much as the rent system did; it would be a decrease to the manufacturer, because he had taken in a previous week 7*s.* 6*d.* out of 25*s.* for frame rent.

1503. But whether it is a system of stoppage on the part of the manufacturer in the price he has to pay to the middleman, or a deduction in the way you have mentioned, it lessens the cost of production to the manufacturer, and so far goes to increase his profits?—I am sure I do not know whether it increases his profits or not.

1504. The less he pays for the production of the goods, the more he retains to himself out of the price he gets from the customer?—Yes; but I cannot see why the poundage system should increase the profits of a manufacturer, when he had taken before 7*s.* 6*d.* out of 25*s.*

1505. But both these arrangements, whether the arrangement of the 2*s.* poundage or the stoppage for rent, are in amount far beyond the fair interest due to the value of the frames?—Yes.

1506. So that, under either the one system or the other, he is getting something in the shape of extra interest for his frames; it is a part of his profit as a manufacturer; it is part of his gains in the year?—Yes, he wants some profit.

1507. And that is one way in which he gets it, is it not?—He wants some profit for his outlay of capital in machinery, and we consider that he ought to have it.

1508. If he did not get this profit, he would be trying to reduce the wages; if

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in truth he could not upon this system get the same amount of profit as other people engaged in the same trade, he must either take less than his neighbours, or reduce the wages he pays for production?—I will warrant that if he thought he was not getting profits enough, or if he thought that by reducing the workmen's wages a little more he would get more profit, he would not be backward in doing it.

1509. He would say, "I must go out of business altogether, or I must pay less to the workmen?"—As one manufacturer could not do that without the others following in the same destructive course, they would be upon the heels of him immediately. We have had manufacturers in Leicester who have been on certain occasions (and I am sorry to say it has occurred too frequently) the first to start a reduction of 2*d.* a dozen; and when they have started that, the very next week the rest have followed on their heels. They say, "We must make the same reduction, or how are we to compete with them in the market?" they say that, and act upon it.

1510. Would it not be better for the workmen, if they could, to share in those profits by becoming themselves owners of these frames?—I greatly question it. I believe that if they had frames of their own, the manufacturers would want them to pay a rent or poundage, as an acknowledgment to have them employed.

1511. But if there was a brisk demand all the manufacturers would not do that?—No; they do not all do it now, because they have not machinery of their own, but most of them have.

1512. You told me that you had a couple of frames of your own on your own premises?—I said that I had some of my own.

1513. Have you now?—No, I have not now.

1514. When you had them, did you get other people to work them?—I worked them myself.

1515. I thought you spoke of having more than one frame?—I never had two at once.

1516. Do you know any other workmen who, like yourself, have got together two or three frames into their own premises?—Not their own; individuals have an odd frame of their own, and they run them in this sort of way: where a person has a frame of his own, suppose he has a set of glove frames, a hand and two fingers, or what not, and he gets one of his own, he will get work for them when the manufacturers want it; and in this case it happens, that the man, having three of the manufacturers' frames and one of his own, he can run it in unknown to the manufacturer; let a girl have it, or a woman, or a boy, and they can run it in without the manufacturer knowing it.

1517. Would there be any difficulty in a dozen men, each the possessor of a frame of his own, working together and sending in their work, the manufacturer dealing with them without reference to the middleman?—I believe that if a dozen men in Leicester were to agree to unite together, and were to put their energies together to make themselves independent of the middlemen, the great majority certainly, though not all, of the manufacturers would set their faces against those dozen men, and the very first market they knew they went to they would cut them to that nicety that they would never go there any more if they could help it.

1518. That would not be the case with all the manufacturers, you say?—No; there are always honourable exceptions.

1519. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You stated, in reply to a question put to you by the Chairman as to the reason why the work was spread, that a young person was employed who, after one or two years, would only make one dozen pairs in a week, but would still pay full rent; now let me go on with that; that young person, I understand you to say, would make one dozen pairs of stockings in a week?—Yes.

1520. What would be the value of that one dozen pairs of stockings?—If they were a dozen of wrought hose, 24 gauge, they would not be more than 3*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* 9*d.*

1521. Then from that 3*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* 9*d.* would be deducted the full rent of one shilling?—Yes, I would illustrate it in this way; that these young persons who are employed in this way as a means for the middlemen and others to exact the rent, are the very parties who, in case of a depression in the trade, come into competition with the man who is the head of a family.

1522. You are speaking now of women and children?—Yes, women and children;

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children; but, in my opinion, if these persons had to work on net contracts such a state of things would not exist, but the head of the family would have a proper amount of work to do instead of its being divided among three, or four, or five different persons; and then we think, as workmen, that this would be a decided benefit, because if there is now, we will say, work enough for 300 wrought hose hands in Wickston, a village in Leicestershire, and if they are all fully employed, and can have work enough, and suppose there are two-thirds of them that are women and boys, and in this case, if they had net contracts, in the very worst times, or in times of flat trade, they would take one away.

1523. Take one of the frames away?—Yes; we will suppose there is only enough work now to employ two out of three frames; take one of them away, and under the net contract system the two would have the amount of work to perform that the three had. Well, but what is to become of the third? Why, there is the chance of the third getting employment at something else; whereas, if they were kept upon the old jog-trot system of frame rents and charges, there must be three rents taken while there was work for only two individuals.

1524. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why do you hold the stoppage system responsible for this large introduction of labour into the market; why not blame the parents for allowing their children to follow so unprofitable a business?—I really cannot, in their poverty-stricken condition, blame them for scarcely anything they do.

1525. Nor can I; but I suppose they do the best they can?—They think they do, I believe.

1526. They see no alternative between submitting to these exactions, and getting nothing at all?—And getting nothing.

1527. How will the abolition of frame rents by Act of Parliament relieve them from that wretched dilemma?—Just as I have said; I believe that it would put that work into two persons' hands which is now in the hands of three, and the third would have a chance of getting something else, while the two were earning the same amount of money, and paying a shilling less frame rent.

1528. You assume then, that the two would earn the same amount?—I do; that is, in times when there is not enough for them all to do. I presume that all three of them earn what they can when there is plenty.

1529. In times when there is not enough for them to do, I am afraid the master has the opportunity of screwing them down to any level he pleases under any system; has he not?—I do not see any help that the workmen have for that.

1530. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Can you offer any further illustrations as to the spreading the work, and as to frame rents?—Yes, I once worked with a middleman, and I worked with him for seven years; he had nearly 20 frames under him; that was under Mr. Edward Mitchell; there was a flat time came, and during the briskness of the trade this man had the good fortune like many others of the middlemen, to purchase a frame or two of his own. I worked on that which he did purchase, and that frame that I worked at cost the middleman 2 *l.* 15 *s.* I worked this frame for three successive years; I paid for it in rent and charges 3 *s.*, with the exception of two weeks in each year which were allowed generally at that time, a week at Whitsuntide and a week at Christmas, then there were no charges at all; I am afraid that is broken off now to a very great extent. There came after that a flatness in the trade, and Mr. Mitchell told the middleman that he could only employ 12 frames out of the 18 (that I believe was the number), and that he must stop the others; instead of this the middleman put on the whole 18; they took an average of what the men had earned, and put on the whole 18 frames; they then took the whole charges, deducting so much, and, instead of getting what they had been getting, they were only to have a certain amount of money to earn. Well, all the 18 were at work, and we worked at it for a fortnight; we then went up to the manufacturer to ask him whether he could not allow us a little more than this very short stint, as we termed it at that time; he said no, he could not allow any more; he said, "I have put what frames to work I consider I shall want, and I cannot put any more men to work." "Why," I said, "we are all at work." "All at work," he said, "what do you mean by being all at work; you do not mean to say that all my frames are going, do you?" We said, "Yes, we do mean to say all your frames are going." "Well," he said, "they have no business to be; I ordered him to stop six of them." When we got back the result was, that the six frames that should have been stopped before were stopped, but the men that were kept at work had only the same amount of money as they had been getting. The middleman

man had been distributing the work over the six frames that the manufacturer had ordered to be stopped.

1531. You said you worked in a frame for three years?—Yes.

1532. Which cost formerly 2 *l.* 15 *s.*?—Yes.

1533. What money in the shape of repairs was expended in that frame in the three years?—It never cost a farthing.

1534. You paid 22 *l.* 10 *s.* in three years for that which cost him originally 2 *l.* 15 *s.*; is that so?—Yes, decidedly.

1535. In those three years had you full employ?—Not always.

1536. Mr. *Ingham.*] The middleman in the case to which you have referred did afterwards stop the six frames?—He did, when he was obliged.

1537. And what became of the six persons whose work was stopped?—They went and got other jobs.

1538. Did they get other jobs?—I know two of them did; I do not know what the rest did.

1539. Did the other four starve?—I do not know; if they did not starve they must have got employment or gone to the parish.

1540. You do not remember how they were occupied after they were put out of the frames?— No, I do not; it was not long before they were all back again.

1541. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have said that you have been working in the trade for 30 years?—More than 30.

1542. Have you been steadily working at the trade in Leicester all that time?—No, I have generally worked at it when I could get it to do.

1543. Have you been otherwise employed?—A little, sometimes.

1544. How?—I have been employed by the working men to agitate, in fact; I suppose that is what the question points at; we held a public meeting, and they employed me and another to investigate into the system of the frame stoppages in the county.

1545. You have been employed by your fellow workmen to investigate this question?—Yes.

1546. When you speak of your fellow workmen in Leicester, what numbers constitute the body that may have employed you; how many would you say you represent?—I presume I represent the whole who signed the petition; 4,700 in Leicester.

1547. You think you represent their opinions in what you are stating here?—Decidedly.

1548. Are those workmen anxiously desirous for a change from the charges system to the net system?—Yes; the last public meeting that we held, it was asked and agreed that we should do all we could to get off these stoppages, that they may have net wages.

1549. You have been asked why the workmen do not of themselves endeavour to put this system right, instead of coming to Parliament to ask them to do it; what is the reason why they do not?—They have no power to do it.

1550. Is that in consequence of their poverty?—Yes, they have no means; when there is such a demand for goods that they cannot be got fast enough to supply the market, the men sometimes get to know of it, and will ask for a little advance, say a penny or twopence a dozen on the 4*s.* or 3*s.* 6 *d.* hose; but there is the greatest difficulty in the world in getting it, though, perhaps, a few weeks previous they have taken that amount off their wages when trade has been flat; yet when they go to ask for it to be put on again, they get it put on with the greatest difficulty.

1551. Is there anything like unanimity among the men as to a desire for the removal of the rent and charges system?—Yes.

1552. Do you think the men are unanimous upon that point?—Perhaps there might be one found out of a couple of hundred or so that might differ in opinion.

1553. But, generally speaking, they are unanimous?—Yes.

1554. And you are of opinion that it would be beneficial to the men generally if such a change were made?—Yes.

1555. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is not the influence of the middlemen very much opposed to the carrying out of that object; and when you are asked whether the workmen are unanimous in wishing it to be carried out, is it not the case that many of them may not express a desire for it, because they may be more or less under the influence of the middleman?—Some of them may be timid. We know of cases in which men have said to us, "Now, do not let the petition be brought to such a

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place, for if you do, and they know we sign it, perhaps we shall get turned away; we will come to such a place, and it shall be signed there."

1556. Are they not dependent for work in a good many instances on the middlemen?—Generally so.

1557. And the middlemen are interested in maintaining the present system? —Yes.

1558. *Chairman.*] They dare not speak their opinions, for fear of risking their employment?—Many dare not.

1559. Sir *H. Halford.*] Under those circumstances, is it not rather to be wondered at that so many have petitioned?—Yes.

1560. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Entertaining these opinions, what remedy do you propose to apply to the evils of which you complain?—A net contract; that we should like, instead of being subject to these heavy stoppages; we should like to know that when we commence our employment on the Monday morning, the first shilling we earn is our own.

1561. That is, that it is not taken for rent and charges?—That it is not taken for rent and charges; but under this system, if I work a wide frame, 40 inches wide, or from that to 45, the rent and charges of that, independent of winding, would be about 4*s.* 6*d.* or 5*s.*; and if I go to work, and there is plenty for me to do, I have to earn that 5*s.* before I get a farthing for myself. We think that is very unjust; we think the very first money we earn when we go to work we ought to have to ourselves, without being subject to stoppage for this, that, and the other.

1562. You heard the proposition of Mr. Biggs; the first Bill that he named, and that he thought would be effectual for the purpose, was the entire abolition of rent; that on and after a certain day, some two years hence, rents should no longer be demanded or taken. Would that, in your opinion, meet the question? —No.

1563. Why?—Because there are other things connected with it as well as rent; suppose I am a journeyman, as I was in the case I told you of; the manufacturer in those sort of frames that I worked in at that time would charge from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* rent; that would be for himself for his outlay; that would be the net rent for the frame; but there is another charge on the workman just as much more as that, there is another 1*s.* 6*d.* for the middleman.

1564. For rent?—For charges; in the frame I worked in it would not have been more than 1*s.* 6*d.* for rent; but besides that the middleman would have had 1*s.* 6*d.* more, which would have made it 3*s.* to me; so that if anything is done relative to passing a law at all, then the middleman might come in and say, "Instead of the manufacturer having 1*s.* 6*d.* rent and me 1*s.* 6*d.* charges, I will have 3*s.* charges."

1565. If rent were abolished by Act of Parliament, would not charges become a matter of bargain between employers and employed?—If there is a bargain made on behalf of a workman, he is so weak that the bargain is a mere nothing.

1566. He bargains for his work at so much a dozen, does he not?—He cannot stand to his bargain; he has no power. Suppose I agree to-day with a middleman to find me some work, I say, "What are the charges?" "So much;" and suppose he says to me next week when I go to work, "These charges will be 6*d.* more," what am I to do?

1567. I gather from what you say now that you think nothing would be effectual but the doing away of both rent and charges?—Of both.

1568. And that a system of net wages should be established by Act of Parliament?—I do not know; I would rather that Parliament would let wages alone. I mean this, that Parliament ought, I think, to step in to protect the weak against the strong.

1569. Sir *H. Halford.*] Would you be satisfied with such an interposition as that which was involved in the Bill introduced last Session?—Yes, to prevent any stoppage from wages.

1570. Any rent and charges by stoppage from wages?—Yes.

1571. It does not propose to prevent rent, but to prevent its stoppage from wages, does it not?—Yes.

1572. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you not say that 3*d.* in the shilling is a fair equivalent for rent and charges?—Two-pence halfpenny, or rather less than that.

1573. That would leave the workman about 9½*d.* to receive?—Yes.

1574. On

1574. On your net system?—That would be applicable only to certain branches.

1575. But it would leave 9 ½ *d.*?—Yes.

1576. Pass what Act of Parliament you please, would there be anything to prevent a man, in bad times, from offering 6 *d.* or 3 *d.* or 4 *d.* instead of 9 ½ *d.*?—No.

1577. Then what good will an Act of Parliament do?—Because when we have earned the 9½ *d.* we should have it, and we do not now.

1578. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have not any desire to interfere, directly or indirectly, with the rate of wages?—Not at all.

1579. You know they will be regulated by the supply and demand?—Yes, as far as we understand matters, though it is not always the case; if there is more work wanted than there are men to perform it, that is a matter between the men and the manufacturers themselves, or their employers; we do not think that they would come under the Act of Parliament.

1580. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean to tell the Committee, that the people of Leicester think that a legislative enactment will have no effect upon their wages in any way?—I mean to tell the Committee, that we have no intention or desire whatever that Government or Parliament should pass a law to interfere at all with our wages; all that we want Parliament to do is this: to say that when we have earned money, whatever the agreement may be, whether it be 6 *d.*, 2 *d.*, or only a farthing, no man shall step in and say, "I will have half of it."

1581. Do you think that the earnings of the people engaged in the hosiery trade will be affected in any way if Parliament should pass such an Act as has been suggested; will they go home at the end of the week with more or less money in their pockets?—That will all depend on circumstances.

1582. As far as this Bill is concerned, if it is to do the workmen any good, it must put more money into their pockets in some way or other; what I want you to do is to show us the connexion between the Act of Parliament, and putting more money in the workmen's pockets?—It will all depend upon circumstances; if I am under a nominal rate of wages, that is, if I am subject to certain deductions to be made from a certain amount I earn, then I go to the other system. Under the rent system, in many cases, they only have about half what they earn, because the other half is deducted, and in some cases a great deal more than half is deducted from their earnings for frame rents and charges. Now it would make in a case of this sort a little difference in the wages, in cases where they are unfairly dealt with; we only want, of course, to interfere with the unfair, and not with the fair. If a person deducts half-a-crown from five shillings, of course the man has but half-a-crown left; and if that was all the work he was allowed to perform under the system of 2 ½ *d.* in the shilling, he would only have a shilling and a half-penny deducted, and would go home with 3 *s.* 11 ½ *d.*, whereas under this system he would only have half-a-crown.

1583. A workman voluntarily enters into a contract, knowing that he is going to pay a week's rent if he only works for half a week?—No, he does not do it voluntarily.

1584. He must either do it or go into the street; why is it that he is exposed to that alternative?—Because he has no means to help himself.

1585. For what reason?—The reason I have already assigned is one great cause; the stoppage system from men's wages has introduced into the trade a great amount of machinery, that never would have been introduced had it not been for the stoppage system.

1586. The fact is, there is a superabundance of labour, is there not?—Just at this time.

1587. But even in good times there is a superabundance; they have the greatest difficulty in getting a rise of wages, have they not?—Yes, but it does not prove that there is a superabundance of labour if they want more articles than the people can make.

1588. Did you ever see any of the accounts that have come from Australia?—Yes.

1589. Did you ever hear of a man getting 30 *s.* for carrying a carpet-bag from a ship to the beach?—No; if that is the case I wish I was there to carry one.

1590. *Chairman.*] Does not the present system give great facilities to fraud?—Decidedly, and to immorality.

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1591. And all you ask for is an Act to protect you from the possibility of fraud?—That is all we ask; we want protection for such a case as this: a person in two weeks earns 1 *l.* 16 *s.* 3½ *d.*, and the deductions made from that amount to 1 *l.* 8 *s.* 7 *d.*

1592. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] That is on the wide frames?—Yes, leaving the man but 7 *s.* 8½ *d.* for his two weeks' work.

1593. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Is that a practical instance; was it actually done?—It was decidedly done.

1594. Mr. *Ingham.*] What were the items of deduction?—This man had to have his machine altered from one sort of work to another the first week, and he hindered a considerable time in helping the smith to alter it, and in doing what he could himself; then he was in hopes, of course, that he should do better the next week; you must understand that full rent and charges were not taken the first week, because this machine pays, I believe, 15 *s.* rent and charges, or 15 *s.* 6 *d.*

1595. A week?—Yes; but you will bear in mind that this is a machine which will cost considerably more than the narrow frames we have been talking about; probably it would cost 100 *l.*; then the next week he had the prospect of doing rather more work, and he, of course, submitted to what was done, in the hope that he should be able to get something remunerative. Friday morning came, and there was no more work for him, so he had to give over, and the full rent and charges were taken for that week; his whole 15 *s.* was taken in that week, the charges for the two weeks amounting to 1 *l.* 8 *s.* 7 *d.* out of 1 *l.* 16 *s.* 3½ *d.*

1596. You say 15 *s.* a week was deducted for rent and charges?—Yes.

1597. Then the rent and charges for two weeks would only be 1 *l.* 10 *s.*?—That would have been the case if he had been charged the full rent.

1598. He was charged, you say, 1 *l.* 16 *s.* for the two weeks?—No; he earned 1 *l.* 16 *s.* 3½ *d.*, and was charged 1 *l.* 8 *s.* 7 *d.*

1599. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose a man takes a shop for which he pays rent, and that for a fortnight he loses instead of making anything, do you mean to say you think we ought to pass an Act of Parliament on the subject because he has lost money?—No.

1600. Lord *J. Manners.*] Supposing the people on whose behalf you have been speaking were given to understand that their wages would not be materially or at all raised by the passing of such an Act of Parliament as you ask for, would they, in your opinion, still be anxious for the passing of such an Act?—Yes, decidedly.

1601. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have been asked why the workmen do not exert themselves, instead of applying to Parliament; does it occur to you that there is any mode by which the workmen could help themselves in this matter?—I cannot see any.

1602. Do you think it would be of any service to them if they were to resort to strikes, combinations, and that sort of thing?—No.

1603. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do you not think that they might, by entering into a sort of partnership, become the owners themselves of frames?—As to their becoming owners of frames themselves, my opinion is, that it is utterly impossible. If you were to go to them on a Monday morning, you would find that they could not give you two halfpence for a penny.

1604. But suppose there were some opportunities given for assisting working men to enter into partnership for this purpose?—I believe there would be the greatest competition against them.

1605. Mr. *Gardner.*] Even if they had frames of their own they would have to pay rent, would they not?—I believe they would.

Veneris, 11° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Cobbett.	Lord John Manners.
Sir Joshua Walmsley.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Mundy.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *George Buckby*, called in; and further Examined.

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1606. *Chairman.*] YOU delivered in a paper to the Committee in the course of your examination on Tuesday; have you anything to say with regard to that paper?—No more than I have already said, that it distinctly and very clearly shows the working of the two systems, as agreed to by the workmen and manufacturers; there is a certain amount taken off as an equivalent for rent and charges and stitching, and so forth, and then the other is left for the workmen to receive clear.

1607. When trade is slack, has the supply and demand of hosiery anything whatever to do with the employment of the frames?—Yes, to some extent, no doubt, but I think not to such an extent as warrants the impositions that take place very often in the hosiery manufacture.

1608. Would there be any employment given out in slack times if it was not for the rent to be obtained for the use of the frames?—I think not.

1609. Is it notorious that the slowest hands are employed, in order that the least amount of work may be done, so that the largest amount of frame-rent may be obtained from the workmen?—Decidedly.

1610. If the smallest amount of work is offered to a framework-knitter, has he any option but to accept it?—None whatever.

1611. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Except that of applying to the parish?—But the parish would not have anything to do with him.

1612. *Chairman.*] If a framework-knitter were to refuse work because the terms were too hard, would he not lose the chance of being employed when trade became brisk?—Decidedly.

1613. Lord *J. Manners.*] And he would be refused parochial relief if he applied for it?—Yes, whilst he could have work at any price.

1614. *Chairman.*] Is not a frame then comparatively unprofitable, except that it produces a rent to the owner of the frame, to pay which the operative cannot earn a living?—It is very unprofitable to the workman, but the owner of the frame derives a great profit from it in rent.

1615. The profit that is derived from it is not so much upon the hosiery as upon the frame rent?—No, that is the best profit considerably.

1616. Is he not compelled to submit, without choice, to pay rent for the frame without employment sufficient for his payment of the rent, because the parish would not relieve him if he could get the smallest employment, and if he did give up his frame and receive parochial relief he might be deprived of being employed again?—But I do not think they would give him parochial relief under such circumstances; I do not think the Poor Law Guardians, if he was an able-bodied man, and could get work, would relieve him at all.

1617. Supposing he could get parochial relief, would he not, by giving up his frame, incur the risk of not being employed again?—I believe he would.

1618. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you any other papers that you wish to put in, or any other statement that you wish to make to the Committee?—Yes, I should like to refer, if the Committee will allow me, to cases without giving the names of the parties, because I think that if the names were mentioned the workmen

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would have to suffer; therefore, I should like to give the cases without mentioning the names of the parties.

1619. But you have no objection to give the names to the Chairman if necessary?—Not at all.

1620. *Chairman.*] What are the cases to which you refer?—There is one case in which a man earns 12 *s.* 6 *d.*, out of which is deducted 10 *s.*, leaving net to the workman 2 *s.* 6 *d.*

1621. Is that in a week?—In one week.

1622. In what trade is that?—In a wide frame.

1623. Lord *J. Manners.*] Has that occurred within the last week, or month, or year?—It is this year.

1624. Is that in Leicester?—Yes, in Leicester town.

1625. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are you speaking of facts which you really know yourself?—The persons themselves have told me.

1626. And have you reason to believe that what they stated to you is true?—Yes, or I would not bring their statements here; there is another case of a man earning 9 *s.* 6 *d.*, out of which 8 *s.* is deducted, and 1 *s.* 6 *d.* left.

1627. Sir *H. Halford.*] Under what circumstances were those deductions made; were they made at a time when trade was slack, or in sickness?—No, the man was altering his machine for the accommodation of the master, and although he was doing it for his master's accommodation, and altering the machine from one sort of work to another, he had this enormous amount deducted from his 9 *s.* 6 *d.*

1628. Mr. *Mundy.*] How much of that was for rent?—I should say about 6 *s.* would be reckoned as rent.

1629. *Chairman.*] Six shillings a week for the frame?—Yes.

1630. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] A wide frame?—It was a rotary frame.

1631. Sir *H. Halford.*] Does that altering of the frames generally devolve upon the workman; is he required to do it?—Yes, with the aid of a frame-smith, if the smith be wanted, though it very frequently happens that the smith is not required; the man can do it himself.

1632. What sort of alteration is it?—Supposing a man is making four shirts at once, or three, as the case may be; then he has to alter from these three to five, or from four to six, as the case may be; and he has to take nearly all the inside of his frame out, in order to put things in their proper places, to make the different quantities of work.

1633. And what time would that take?—The time it would take would be according to what he had to do; whether it was to be altered from a three to a six, or from a three to a five; if it was to be altered from a three to a six, it would not give him so much trouble as altering it from a three to a five.

1634. But it is a process that may require considerable time?—Yes, considerable time very often. I can mention another case in which 9 *s.* 2 *d.* was earned and 7 *s.* 6 *d.* deducted, leaving 1 *s.* 8 *d.*; that was all the work the man had to do; he could not have any more.

1635. When a man is required to alter his frame, are the materials delivered to him?—He only wants a wrench and a hammer.

1636. But the materials for work?—Not till he has altered the frame.

1637. But his time is occupied in altering the frame?—Yes; he does not require any materials till he is ready to commence working.

1638. *Mr. Mundy.*] If he cannot alter the frame without the assistance of a smith, who pays the smith?—The manufacturer, or the person who owns the frame would pay the smith.

1639. Lord *J. Manners.*]—Under what circumstances did the last case you have mentioned occur?—There was not any more work.

1640. How many days had the man been working to earn that 9 *s.* 2 *d.* wages?—I think he said about four. Then in another case a man earned 7 *s.*, from which there was deducted 3 *s.* 7 *d.*, leaving him 3 *s.* 5 *d.* to receive; no more work was allowed in that case; he did all the work there was for him to do.

1641. How many days' work does that represent?—I should say it would be between three and four; four days, I dare say, it would be. Then in another case a man earned 5 *s.*, from which 3 *s.* 3 *d.* was deducted as net rent by the manufacturer, leaving the man but 1 *s.* 9 *d.* to receive from the warehouse. We had the particulars of that case from the man's own lips. There is another case of 7 *s.* 4½ *d.* being earned, and 3 *s.* deducted out of it, leaving 4 *s.* 4 *d.* net; and no more

more work was allowed in that case. In all those three glove cases no more work was allowed; the men did all the work that there was for them to do.

1642. Do you answer for the absolute correctness of those statements?—Decidedly; I believe they are quite correct. The persons brought them to us themselves, and told us how they had been served.

1643. Have any similar cases come positively under your own cognizance?—With full charges on short work?

1644. Yes?—Yes, many times.

1645. Will you have the goodness to state some of those cases which have come under your own immediate knowledge?—I remember being charged full charges for four days' work myself more than once.

1646. Sir *H. Halford.*] How long ago?—It is several years since that was the case with myself, but still the system goes on, and gets worse rather than better. I have a number of cases here, and I should wish, after explaining them, to hand them in. I have here two correct copies of certificates which were given to us by the Poor Law Guardians in the district where the men applied for relief. These cases I should say would show an average of more than one-half, or about that, deducted for rent and charges. If the Committee will allow me I will hand the paper in.

1647. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do the certificates state the particular localities and the particular dates?—Yes; they give the dates.

1648. And the places are also stated?—Yes, Leicester.

1649. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Does the document show that the men belonged to Leicester?—No; I do not know that it does, but both instances occurred in Leicester.—[*The Witness delivered in a Paper.*] *Vide* Appendix.

1650. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are in possession of the names of the parties concerned in those cases?—Yes.

1651. Were they aware that those cases were likely to be produced before this Committee?—Some of them were.

1652. Did they express any objection to their names being known?—No objection at all.

1653. But you think it is more prudent that their names should not publicly appear?—Yes, I do not want them to have any persecution about it.

1654. But it is not from any apprehension of displeasure on their part that you wish to withhold them?—Not the slightest; I believe every case to be decidedly correct, and I have not the slightest objection on my own part to give the names, except that which I have stated.

1655. Is the Chairman in possession of the names?—No.

1656. But you have no objection to give their names confidentially to the Chairman?—No, I have not.

1657. You have been engaged, I believe, in the glove manufacture?—Yes, I have.

1658. Are gloves susceptible of fashion in the same sense as stockings are; I mean of being shaped in the frame?—Yes, they can do that, but they very seldom do.

1659. In order to do that it is necessary to employ a narrow frame, I presume?—That would not signify much; they could narrow the fingers in a wide frame the same as they can in a narrow one.

1660. Gloves are manufactured frequently upon narrow frames, are they not?—Yes, principally.

1661. Is there any advantage in that in the manufacture of gloves?—Not to the workmen.

1662. Is a narrow frame more peculiarly adapted to the manufacture of gloves than a wide frame?—It certainly can be worked easier.

1663. And with equal rapidity?—Yes, you may work them with greater rapidity the smaller they are.—[*The Witness delivered in a paper.*] *Vide* Appendix.

Mr. *Joseph Elliott,* called in; and Examined.

1664. *Chairman.*] I BELIEVE you are a framework-knitter, living at Leicester?—Yes.

1665. Have you had any experience in working upon the net-payment principle, either as a journeyman or as a frameholder?—I have, as both.

1666. Do you believe that that system, if adopted, would be the means of correcting

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correcting many of the abuses which are at present complained of?—I have no doubt it would be of great benefit to the trade; it would correct many of the abuses that exist; as a journeyman, I have found it give full satisfaction in the factory to a great number of men; and having been a frame-holder, I also found it fully satisfactory to my employer and to myself.

1667. Do you represent the views of the working men of Leicester generally upon this question?—I believe I do; I was appointed to represent them before this Committee, and also to prepare petitions; I think the number of signatures attached to the petitions that have recently been presented to the House of Commons will bear me out in this opinion.

1668. You were requested to give evidence by the workmen before this Committee?—Yes, I was nominated for that purpose.

1669. Have you had any means of ascertaining the views of the working men in the county as well as in the town of Leicester?—Yes, I have been requested by the Committee managing the affairs of the framework-knitters in the town of Leicester to visit various places in the county. Two years ago I visited 30 different places in the county of Leicester, and within these last three or four months I have also visited several of the largest places in the county, and the opinions of the men in these places seemed to me to coincide exactly with those of the men in the town; they made great complaints as to the stoppages that are made upon them for frame-rents and other charges.

1670. Do you mean the stoppages that have been made by the middlemen?—There are more complaints against the stoppages of the middlemen than of the manufacturer; considerably so.

1671. Do you find that the abuses the workmen complain of exist in the country to the same extent as in the town?—Just the same.

1672. Have the workmen, to your knowledge, ever tried any means to get those grievances redressed, prior to petitioning the House of Commons upon the subject?—Yes; some few years ago I was deputed by the glove branch, which I then worked in, together with two other persons, to wait upon the middlemen belonging to that branch in order to solicit them respectfully to take a proportionate number of days' charges in accordance with the number of days the men were employed. That is, if they had only two, three, or four days' employment, a proportionate amount of expenses should be taken; but I found that there were but a few at that time who would entertain the question; this was followed by a secession from labour; a strike took place, but it ended with the same results, and hence followed the necessity for petitioning the House of Commons; they found that there was no other remedy.

1673. Sir *H. Halford.*] The necessities of the men prevented their holding out?—Yes.

1674. *Chairman.*] You believe that they possess no means of their own of bringing about such a change as that which you would propose?—None whatever; they are decidedly at the mercy of the system; they must either submit to what their employer chooses to stop, or starve.

1675. Can you suggest any means of protecting the owners of frames against having their frames used in working for other parties, if the net system were adopted?—From the experience I have had of the present system, and also as a guarantee to the owners of property for the future, I would suggest that if any parties should use a frame improperly, or should damage or neglect to give it up when required to do so, it should be looked upon as a criminal act, and they should be punished accordingly. I have no doubt that there are frames at the present moment belonging to manufacturers which are working to other hosiers, and the masters letting them are taking in work at less prices than they would receive from the owners of those frames; they stop the rent from their workmen and put it into their own pockets.

1676. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Has not the manufacturer the opportunity of recovering his frame when he pleases?—I understand there is a law to that effect, but I am not clear upon the question.

1677. Do you not think that the dismissal of the workman would be a sufficient punishment, without having recourse to any penal enactment?—I should presume that it might answer the purpose, but at present frames are worked by other middlemen, unknown to the owners of the frames, and the parties will take out work

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at a considerably less price, using the other manufacturers' frames and putting the rent into their own pockets; it acts most injuriously, and ought to be prevented.

1678. If a workman has a frame lying idle, do you think it is fair that he should be obliged to stand still because the owner of the frame has no employment for him?—What I should say is this, that he should not use the frame unknown to the owner of it, and appropriate to himself the benefit of that frame; but I do think that there should be no objection to any party working the frame, if he had an agreement with the owner of the frame.

1679. Do you not think that dismissal by the owner of the frame would be a sufficient punishment without having recourse to any penal enactment?—I have no doubt that it would be sufficient for the operative, but it is with the middle-man that the system I have described is practised.

1680. *Chairman.*] Are there any instances that you are aware of in which persons have had to pay full rent and charges in cases of sickness?—Yes; many cases of that kind have been forwarded to me; I have selected a few only, to which, with the permission of the Committee, I will refer; but for the reasons assigned by the last witness, I would beg, with your permission, to withhold the names of the parties, unless the Committee require them to be stated.

1681. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But you are prepared to give those names to the Chairman if the Committee should desire it?—Most decidedly. There is the case of a person who was ill for seven weeks, and unable to do any kind of work.

1682. *Chairman.*] When was this?—The beginning of 1854. During the two following weeks, when he had somewhat recovered from his sickness, he made two dozens of stockings; he was working in a wrought-hose frame; that amounted to 7*s.*, including the seaming of those stockings; he worked direct to a manufacturer at Leicester; the stockings were taken in, and the whole 7*s.* was stopped for the seven weeks he was ill and unable to work; and besides that he was put down in the book as being 2*s.* in arrear.

1683. I think you say that that case occurred about the beginning of the year 1854?—Yes; I have another case here in which a person working in a factory was ill for three weeks, and unable to work; his frame-rent and master's charges amounted to 6*s.* a week; he was not able to earn a penny during those three weeks, but when he recovered he had the whole 18*s.* to pay from his earnings afterwards.

1684. When did the second case of which you have spoken occur?—About the same date.

1685. The beginning of last year?—Yes.

1686. Did these cases occur in the villages, or in the town of Leicester?—In the town of Leicester.

1687. Both of them?—The stoppages were made in Leicester, though one man lived in the county. Here is a third instance: a man worked direct to a warehouse; he was ill six weeks; but here the employer did forgive him one week, charging him five weeks out of the six. After he had been ill a week he sent notice to his employer that he was unable to work, and that he would leave it to him whether he would stop his rent or not. I know as a fact that he was ill at the time, for he belonged to the same sick-club that I belonged to, and I was ordered to have reference to the sick-book to see what he was paid at the time. This took place in August 1854. I have had a great number of other instances forwarded to me from the county, but I presume that other witnesses will come from those places to speak to them more correctly than I can.

1688. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you mean to say that you can supply to the Committee, if required, the names of the parties who have perpetrated the frauds (for they are nothing less than frauds) of which you have spoken?—Yes. There is another case that I would refer to, and which occurred next door to my own residence; I had a son who worked in the shop at the same time. The man was taken ill on the Wednesday night prior to Christmas 1854; he sent notice to his master that he was unable to work, and declared upon his sick-club; another man was put in the frame on the following day, Thursday, but the sick man was charged the full rent and charges for the six days of the same week; his earnings up to the Wednesday night amounted to 7*s.* 1*d.*, and there was 5*s.* deducted from that for the six days' expenses.

1689. Lord *J. Manners.*] What happened to the man who was put to the frame?—There was another hand put to the frame the following day; he worked

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the latter part of the week for three days, and on the Saturday he had to pay the rent for those three days.

1690. *Chairman.*] Did they both pay rent for the same time, then?—Decidedly.

1691. They both paid rent at the same time for the same frame?—Yes.

1692. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are you equally sure as to the correctness of that case as you are as to the correctness of the others you have mentioned?—I have been informed by both parties that this did occur.

1693. Have you mentioned all the cases that you wish to refer to?—There are many more that I could have brought. There is one other I would mention; the case of a man working in a wrought-hose frame; this person stated the same as others, that if any testimony was required he should willingly give it; he was not able to earn so high an amount of wages as the other men did; he had earned 2*s.* 6*d.* up to the middle of the week; he was obliged to give over through sickness, and then he had to pay 2*s.*, the full week's expenses for the wrought-hose frame, leaving him 6*d.* to take.

1694. *Chairman.*] Has the workman any means whereby he is able to avoid the payment of rent when he is sick?—He has no means whatever of avoiding the payment, if his employer insists on taking it, with the exception of giving up his frame, and if he does that he runs the risk of not finding employment again; he may hold it on perhaps a week or two, in the hope of recovering.

1695. Then he is obliged to submit to the penalty of losing his frame, if he does not pay his rent when he is sick and unable to work?—Most decidedly.

1696. Mr. *Biggs.*] That is not of course an invariable rule; you mean it occurs in some instances?—Yes, there are exceptions I admit.

1697. *Chairman.*] Is that a common case?—There are great numbers who are in a similar condition, and who are subject to have these stoppages; I believe I had as many as 20 cases from Stoke Golding, a village in Leicestershire; cases varying from one week up to eleven; there were one who had been ill for 11 weeks, and had the whole rent to pay for the whole of that time after recovery.

1698. Then it is only from an honourable feeling on the part of certain manufacturers, that all manufacturers do not adopt the same system of taking rent when the workmen are sick?—That is precisely the case.

1699. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I understood you to say, that you examined into these cases in order to enable you to speak to them, at the request of the framework knitters?—I did.

1700. Are the men themselves, who have given you these cases, willing to come forward and speak to them if necessary?—I am not aware that they would have any objection to do so; many declared their willingness to do so, if required.

1701. Are these ordinary cases, or are they merely picked cases, and out of the ordinary course?—I admit that some of them are extreme cases; there are others which are common; but there are large numbers so situated.

1702. But there are many exceptions, are there not?—I admit there are exceptions.

1703. Mr. *Mundy.*] Which is the rule and which is the exception?—As far as I am able to ascertain, I believe it is against the workmen.

1704. Do you mean, that in cases of sickness the generality of masters stop the rent when the frame is idle?—I believe so.

1705. And the converse is the exception?—Yes.

1706. *Chairman.*] Is it not your opinion, that there ought to be a law which should oblige all parties to act in the same manner as the honourable part of the trade do act?—Yes; I think it is highly necessary for the protection of the helpless workmen, as also the better-disposed employer.

1707. Sir *H. Halford.*] Were you connected with the trade at the time the Commissioner was examining into this subject 10 years ago?—Yes, I was.

1708. From your knowledge of the trade, do you consider that the abuses, of which you speak, have been mitigated or aggravated since that time?—I believe they have got worse than they were at that time. I believe they are more general in the county as well as in the town.

1709. You are aware of the case that was tried, Chawner *v.* Cummings?—Yes.

1710. Do you believe that the decision which was come to in that case had a prejudicial effect as regarded the interests of the workman?—Since that time, I believe, the complaint has become more general; the employer or the person who

who had no respect to honour, or who had no humane feelings for his workmen, knew there was no law to restrain him in any stoppages he chose to make; he knew that there was no responsibility for any of his acts, and I believe that he has leaned heavier upon them than he would have done if the decision had been different.

1711. That was an effort made on the part of the workmen to relieve themselves from the oppression which was involved in these practices?—Yes.

1712. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are these abuses as common when trade is good as when it is bad?—No.

1713. How do you account for that?—When there is not full employment for the workmen, I find that in such cases, the employer being unrestrained by law, takes what he pleases for rent and charges; where they have plenty of work to do, such a case would not occur as taking full expenses for partial employment. Relative to cases of sickness, I am not aware that there has been any exorbitant or undue advantage taken till recently; I have not noticed that branch of the concern so much till within the last two years.

1714. When there is plenty of employment these abuses do not take place, I understand?—Not upon partial employment, because when there is full employment the men have the work without any restraint.

1715. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Whether there be full or partial employment, are the cases to which you have referred frequent in the trade?—More frequent in a depression than when the trade is good; but there are various branches of the trade, and they are not all good at one time.

1716. Lord *J. Manners.*] Take, for instance, the case you submitted to us of a man who was put into the frame of another man who had to give it up owing to sickness; probably that would have occurred in a case when trade was not bad?—No doubt; trade was good at the time.

1717. But although the trade was good at that time, that did not prevent this extortion from being practised?—No, it did not.

1718. Sir *H. Halford.*] You were concerned, I believe, in procuring signatures to the petitions which have been presented to the House on this subject?—Yes.

1719. Can you state what was the number of signatures to the respective petitions?—Two years ago, in 1853, I believe, they amounted to between 12,000 and 13,000 for the town and county of Leicester. I visited these places, and ascertained the opinions of the people there upon this question. At some places we held meetings, and there they adopted their own petitions. They went round with them and got them signed, and then forwarded them to the committee, of which I was the chairman; and we forwarded them for presentation to the House. They amounted to between 12,000 and 13,000; out of that number, I believe, there were about 1,100 (I am not certain exactly, but somewhere bordering upon that) ratepayers of the town of Leicester, together with a few of the bankers, merchants, and respectable ratepayers of Hinckley.

1720. They signed the petitions on account of the burden upon the rates, which they thought was involved in the present system?—Yes.

1721. Did you find among the workmen any instances of reluctance to sign the petitions?—Not any; there were a few instances in which the masters would not allow any parties to enter their workshops to present a sheet for signatures. There were also cases that we heard of, in which the parties were threatened that if they signed a petition upon the subject, they should leave their employment.

1722. Are there facts of that sort that you are positively certain of?—I am told so by the hands working in those shops.

1723. You were told so by the workmen themselves?—Yes.

1724. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But you do not know it of your own knowledge?—I did not hear the employers state it themselves.

1725. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say the petition was signed by about 1,100 ratepayers, under the apprehension that the present system increased the burden of the poor's rate?—I believe that might be one part of their impression.

1726. I thought you stated that it was their impression?—It was their impression that the present system increased the burden upon the ratepayers.

1727. Have you ever heard it said by persons familiar with the subject, that one result of carrying such a Bill as you wish would create an immediate necessity for additional workhouse accommodation and increased charges upon the poor-rate?—I never heard such an opinion expressed.

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1728. But if you had heard such an opinion expressed, and it had been generally known and believed, it would most likely have altered the sentiments entertained with regard to the expediency of passing a measure such as that you contemplate, would it not?—I cannot say what it might have done.

1729. You have spoken of cases in which the parties have exacted the full frame rent from workmen who have not been able to work in consequence of sickness, and cases, on the other hand, in which a deduction has been made from the rent and charges, when workmen have been sick?—Yes; there are, no doubt, instances of both kinds.

1730. You said you thought everybody should be compelled by law to do what these conscientious and generous men do in that respect; is that your opinion; that those who now exact it during sickness should be compelled by law to do what the more conscientious men do?—I think they ought to be compelled to make an allowance in such cases; in fact, I think, there ought to be a law to prevent stoppages altogether.

1731. What kind of habitations do the framework-knitters live in; do they live in houses of their own generally, or in single rooms?—Of course they live in tenements; it is almost out of their idea for a stocking-maker to have a house of his own.

1732. What do they pay for their rooms by the week?—They pay weekly generally.

1733. How much a week?—Various sums, according to the dimensions of the house; they may pay from 1*s.* 6*d.* up to 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.*, according to the dimensions of the house.

1734. Out of what funds do they pay these rents?—Out of their own earnings, or those of other branches of their families.

1735. How do they pay them when they are sick?—Probably they run on, or there may be some other member of the family who may be earning something at some other employment, which may enable the parent to meet such a case.

1736. Suppose the man who earns the wages is sick, he must either run on, or do what?—There are instances that I know of in which, where the father of a family has been sick, other members of his family have been working at some other employment, so as to enable the father to meet his expenses.

1737. Suppose a person is unable, from sickness, to pay the rent for his room, do you know cases in which he has either been compelled by his landlord to go out of the room, or his goods have been sold to pay the rent?—Yes; there are many cases of that kind.

1738. And you have known cases in which a compassionate landlord has allowed the workman to continue under such circumstances?—Those cases are very rare, I think.

1739. But they are meritorious when they do occur?—Yes.

1740. You would not think of passing a law to compel every landlord to act as a compassionate landlord would act?—It is a matter of choice with them; where the person has the full enjoyment of his house for all the days of the week, I consider he is subject to pay the rent; it is a question whether the landlord chooses to give up the rent or not. If a man who works a frame should give it up, he would incur the risk of being without employment for a considerable time; whereas if a person leaves his house, he can have another.

1741. You think that a workman is obliged to submit to any terms in order to get the chance of employment?—I think so; I think that means ought to be taken to prevent workmen being obliged to pay what they are made to pay; as to arrangements for finding them employment, that is a matter I do not understand.

1742. Were you present during Mr. Buckby's examination?—Some part of it.

1743. He said he thought this system would work beneficially in two ways; one, that if the workmen knew what they would get, that would prevent a great deal of unpleasant feeling?—Yes.

1744. Do you agree with him in that?—Yes.

1745. And he said he thought their own condition in point of wages would be improved in this way; that if there was a sufficient quantity of work given to a family consisting of three persons working three frames, to occupy them for two days in a week, and you prevented parties from receiving frame rent, two frames would be given up, and then the head of the house would have full work for his one frame six days in the week, and receive the same amount of wages that would have been received for the work done by the three frames, and save two frame rents?—I am not prepared to say it would go to the extent of turning two out of

employ. I believe it would diminish them to some extent; I should say one-third, and give to the head of the family the same amount of employment as the three have.

1746. Would that give it him at the same wages?—I believe he would have the same amount of wages and of employment as the three, and that he would save a rent.

1747. You always assume that these three parties working together are to have a united interest as members of the same family; but suppose they are three persons merely occupying frames in the same room, but independent of each other, and suppose the consequence of the system you recommend as a substitute, was that this third party is thrown out of bread, that there is employment given for two, and that the third party is thrown out of bread; do you know of any other occupation to which a framework-knitter could at once go on, his employment ceasing?—The third person would stand a chance of getting some other employment.

1748. But supposing he did not get a chance of employment, would he not say, "Well, if you will not give me employment at the old price, rather than be without bread I will take something less than the old price"?—That would occur, probably, in some instances; the same system is adopted now.

1749. Do you not think it likely that if that was the case it would lead to a permanent reduction in wages, and that men would be willing to come down to any rate of wages, however low, rather than remain without work?—As to the effect it might have on reducing wages, I question whether it could be so bad as the present system.

1750. But if it reduced the wages it would be worse than the present system?—I believe that under the present system, in the hosiery business, there is a great inclination on the part of the parents, if they had the means, to put their children to some other employment; and I believe that preventing the stoppages on the suggested plan would throw a great part of the younger branches out of employ, and they would turn their attention to some other employment. I do not anticipate that it would throw whole families out of employment.

1751. You argue the matter as if necessarily people, to be thrown out of employment must be dependent on and united in interest with the man who retains his work; but that may not be the case?—No; aged or feeble persons might die off, and I believe that the frames would die off with them.

1752. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have been asked whether, in your opinion, it is not fair to charge rent for a house, and whether it is not equally fair to charge rent for a tool or for a frame; do you not see a considerable difference between the two; paying rent for a house in which he constantly resides with his family, and paying a charge for a tool which is employed in making his master's goods, and which is charged to him, whether he is fully employed or not?—The difference is considerable, I conceive.

1753. What is the difference?—When a person rents a house, it is at his service every day in the week; a person having to pay rent for a frame can only have the occupation of it for some part of the week; it is worthless to him that moment his work is done; the difference between the two cases is considerable.

1754. Would you not think it more desirable to throw upon the parish a certain portion of weak hands than bring the whole working population connected with this trade to the barest means of existence, and a great many of them to the parish?—I do think that if there be no other resource than parochial assistance, it would be far better to throw those parties upon the rate-payers than to throw the able-bodied workmen, or persons who are able to follow their employment, out of work; there are at this time a great number of these weaker vessels who earn a less amount of wages than able-bodied men could earn, while able-bodied men are in the streets having nothing to do.

1755. The present system, I presume, encourages the employment of those weaker or very nearly worthless hands for the purpose of sustaining frame rents?—I have no doubt of it whatever.

1756. Is there any difficulty in ascertaining the amount of the various charges made against the workmen, either by the hosiers or the middlemen?—I have a list which contains the rents and charges of, I believe, the greatest number of the parties working in those frames, and I will refer to it, with your permission. The rents and other expenses vary in proportion to the widths of the frames; not according to the condition, but according to the width, of the frames; for a wrought-

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hose frame, that is generally a narrow frame varying from about 15 inches up to 17 or 18 inches wide, the general rent paid to the owner or manufacturer is, I believe, 1 *s.* a week; there are other expenses charged to pay the middleman for his services, including the winding, which will amount to 1 *s.* more, and in some instances 1 *s.* 2 *d.* more; so that for a narrow frame, making one stocking at once, the charges altogether would be something like from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 2*d.*; but beyond this the workman has to pay for his needles, light and fire, and so on, which, on a fair calculation, we conceive to be something like 5 *d.* a week; this is for a journeyman working under a middleman. In the glove department the expenses are heavier; the rent of a frame working gloves, that frame being of the same width as would make one stocking, would be 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, and the master's expenses would also be 1 *s.* 6 *d.*; there would be an expense of winding, which would be about 7 *d.* a week in the gloves, and the workmen would also be subject to pay for lights and needles, and so on, which, I conceive, would be about 5 *d.* a week. I will, if the Committee will allow me, put in this paper, which applies to frames varying in width from 15 inches up to 50 inches.—[*The Witness delivered in the same.*]

Vide Appendix.

1757. I asked you whether there was any difficulty in ascertaining the amount of the various charges made against the workmen either by hosiers or middlemen?—There is a difficulty in it; all the opportunity that we have of ascertaining the rents and charges is got from the workmen; one middleman did give us some information on this head, but he was the only one we could find; we have repeatedly asked other parties, but they objected.

1758. You do not misunderstand my question; would there be any difficulty in ascertaining the amount of rent and charges in each department of the trade, provided the workmen, the middlemen, and the hosiers were desirous of doing so?—There would be no difficulty then.

1759. Would there be any difficulty then in fixing the net money-payment in lieu of those charges?—I cannot see that there would be any difficulty in it whatever.

1760. You know something of middlemen; have you ever been a middleman yourself?—I have held some few frames as a middleman.

1761. Is there any valid reason why the middleman should not be employed and paid entirely by the hosier?—I think not; I think it is the only proper position that they ought to occupy. I believe that if the middlemen were paid by the manufacturers it would be better for both parties.

1762. Would not the hosier be in a much better position to determine what the middlemen really should have, and to make better bargains with them than if those bargains have to be made with 20 or 30 different workmen who are almost at their mercy?—Yes, I think it would be far better; there would be a great deal more confidence existing among them.

1763. Sir *H. Halford.*] The remuneration of the middleman entirely depends, does it not, upon the difference between what he pays the workmen and what he receives at the warehouse himself?—His remuneration consists of what he takes in the shape of charges and other profits from workmen.

1764. He looks to no remuneration whatever from his employers?—None whatever.

1765. And he is in many instances at liberty to make that remuneration which he obtains from the workmen as great as he can?—Yes; he is at liberty to take what he pleases, without any responsibility whatever.

1766. Mr. *Ingham.*] Does not the manufacturer pay the middleman a price for the goods per dozen greater than the middleman pays for the goods to the workmen?—I understand there is something deducted in the shape of profit by the middleman beyond his expenses; but that being a question between the middleman and the manufacturer, I am not prepared to speak much upon that question; he gives him out a certain article to be made at a certain price; the middleman gives the workman a price, and makes his deduction from it.

1767. Suppose I were to give you 1*s.* 6 *d.* a day for work which cost you a shilling; that would be just as much a payment by me at the rate of 3 *s.* a week as if I paid you 3*s.* on Monday morning, at the beginning of the week; it would be a roundabout way of paying you as my agent; in this trade a manufacturer allows his agent to charge him more than he pays to the hands, instead of giving to the agent a regular salary?—He allows the agent to make his profit from the workmen, and not from the manufacturer.

1768. He knows he pays his agent more than the goods cost him, and by that extra

extra payment he remunerates his agent for his trouble?—I am not aware that there is any understanding between the agent and the employer in that particular.

1769. But the agent does real service to the employer because he distributes the wool, and sees that it is rightly worked up, and that the article is in a good condition when it is brought home?—He superintends the work, no doubt.

1770. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you any other paper that you wish to put in evidence?—Yes, I have a paper here, which I will hand in, containing the width and value of an excellent class of frames; these frames were adjudged by a master frame-smith, and he stated that he was prepared to buy or sell frames at this price; that is a frame from 15 inches up to 50.—[*The Witness delivered in a Paper.*] *Vide* Appendix.

1771. I think your evidence is to the effect that the abolition of frame-rents and charges would be beneficial both to the workmen and to the employers?—Yes, I do think so.

1772. And you say you represent large bodies of the workmen, who are all of that opinion?—Yes.

1773. Do you know of any exceptions to that among the workmen?—There may be, and I believe there are, a few exceptions, but the number is very small.

1774. Can you give any reason why they object?—I believe there are parties in all branches of the business who would cling to their masters as much as possible, and even sacrifice principle to have a little employment; it is the depressed position they are in that makes them cling to their masters in the way they do. To show that it would be beneficial to the honest and well-disposed employers, as well as to the workmen, I beg to draw the attention of the Committee to a few cases which have been handed to me. The united gross earnings of eight workmen amount to 4*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.*; from this, for frame-rents and the charges, there is 2*l.* 2*s.* 1*d.* deducted, leaving net money 1*l.* 18*s.* 8*d.* Now take the same amount of hands in a manufactory where they would be dealt fairly by; I take the calculation which the glove trade has hitherto worked up to; that part of it, at least, that is worked upon the net system, where 2¼*d.* is taken per shilling, and adding also 5*s.* 4*d.* for the winding, I find the total amount deducted from the 4*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.* would be 1*l.* 0*s.* 6*d.*, leaving net earnings 3*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.* The difference here would be, that the well-disposed manufacturer would pay 3*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.* for that for which the parties making these exorbitant deductions would pay only 1*l.* 18*s.* 8*d.* I do think that if an equitable system of remuneration were established (and I verily believe that the payment of wages without stoppages would create that equitable system), the parties would not meet each other in collision in the home or foreign markets. Then, in the cut-sock branch, there are five of them earn 1*l.* 7*s.* 7½*d.* in one week; these are all on partial employment; from these there is deducted 16*s.* 1*d.*, leaving 11*s.* 6½*d.* clear money.

1775. Among five?—Among five; the same deduction by the same rule, as above; 2¼ *d.* in the shilling would be 5*s.* 2¼ *d.*, and allowing for winding, 1*s.* 4*d.*, that would leave the net earnings 1*l.* 1*s.* 1¼ *d.* I do this to show that the honest and well-disposed employer, who dealt fairly with his workpeople, would be labouring under this serious disadvantage, that for exactly the same amount of money earned, the honest employer would pay 1 *l.* 1 *s.* 1¼ *d.*; whereas the other would pay only 11 *s.* 6¼ *d.* The same rule applies in the various stages of the whole affair. I must admit here that this is an extraordinary case, but it is a true one. I have made no deduction as to per-centage for the rents and charges; these are rotary frames; there are five of them; their united earnings are 4 *l.* 1 *s.* 2½ *d.*; for rent and charges, there is 3 *l.* 2 *s.* 10 *d.* deducted, leaving 18 *s.* 4½ *d.*

1776. Mr. *Mundy.*] It was divided among five?—To be divided among five.

1777. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] This is when they are short of employment?—Yes.

1778. Can you give the Committee any idea how long those men are working; you have given three statements; the first five earn 2 *s.* 4 *d.*; the second, 4 *s.* 3 *d.*; and the third, 3 *s.* 10 *d.* each: what length of time have those parties been employed?—They would be probably three days each earning the whole amount of money, previous to the deductions being made; but that is the full amount of deductions that would be made, had they been at work the whole six days.

1779. Mr. *Biggs.*] Are these actual cases?—Yes, they are actual cases.

1780. Were they adults, or elderly people, or boys?—They were men, averaging

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averaging from 30 to 35 or 40 years of age; one of them is my next-door neighbour.

1781. Have you any other papers that you wish to give in?—Yes; here are two papers, which I should wish to lay before the Committee; but, as I have said before, I should not wish the names of the workmen to appear.—[*The Witness delivered in the same.*]

Vide Appendix.

1782. Have you another paper?—Yes; a list of 12 men was given to me by a middleman, and the average earnings, after the deductions are made, amount to 5*s.* 7*d.* net money; the average net earnings of 12 shirt hands amount to 11*s.* 4*d.*—[*The Witness delivered in a Paper.*]

Vide Appendix.

1783. How many firms are working on the net system?—Mr. Preston, Mr. Stallard, Mr. Collins, and there are others who partially work upon that system; in their factories they adopt the net system, and in the out hands they make stoppages. There is one factory at Kibworth, a place some distance from Leicester, where they have been for years working upon the pure net system. I saw a person very recently who worked in that place, who I expected would be called to give evidence before this Committee, but I can say with truth that it has given the greatest satisfaction both to the employer and the workpeople.—[*The Witness delivered in a Paper.*]

Vide Appendix.

Mr. *William Butcher*, called in; and Examined.

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1784. *Chairman.*] I BELIEVE you are engaged in the hosiery manufacture at Leicester?—Yes.

1785. How long have you been in the trade?—Nearly 30 years, or about 30 years.

1786. What number of frames do you employ?—I have employed between two and three hundred; I am not employing so many now.

1787. Are all those frames your own?—Yes.

1788. You do not hire any frames from other parties?—Not one; I have not done so for some years.

1789. What is the system you pursue with regard to the framework-knitters; do you adopt the frame-rent system or the net system?—The frame-rent system.

1790. Are you of opinion that the system of making deductions from the wages of the workmen works ill?—It does in some cases; it has its advantages and its disadvantages.

1791. Do you believe that a system of making no deduction for rent would work better for the framework-knitters?—If it could be carried out satisfactorily to both parties it would do so; but it is a question I have considered for many years, and I dare say seven or eight years ago I stated I thought it would be an advantage to do away with the frame-rents; but I see so many difficulties besetting the question, that I cannot see how it could be well arranged so long as the frames are let out to the respective families, scattered as they are for 20 miles around Leicester.

1792. Does that arise from the manufacturers not agreeing, or would it be better, do you think, if there were a general law which obliged them all to agree to do away with the frame-rent?—That is the difficulty that I see; I see it is difficult to pass a general law to enforce that; I am afraid that any Act you could pass would be evaded.

1793. Is your business carried on with the intervention of middlemen?—In part.

1794. Do you see any difficulty in a middleman being paid by the manufacturer for his employment, instead of deriving his income from the earnings of the workmen?—No; there would be no difficulty in giving him a per-centage if that was understood.

1795. Would it not be more satisfactory to the workmen that there should be no deductions from their wages, and that they should receive their remuneration from the manufacturer; and that instead of deductions being made from the wages of the workmen, the middleman should be remunerated by the manufacturer for his agency?—It so happens that there are very few middlemen who are confined to one manufacturer. Under the present system of scattering the frames throughout the country, a middleman would be employed by six or eight different warehouses;

warehouses; consequently he is not so much in the position of a servant as he is in the position of a small manufacturer.

1796. But it is not uncommon in other matters for an agent to be agent for six or eight different parties; might not that be equally convenient in the hosiery trade; for instance, land agents are employed by different proprietors of land; might not the same system be carried out by the manufacturer of hosiery?—It would be difficult to do so, because the goods which are produced weekly, require examining, and they must be paid for according to what they are worth; the cases are not, I think, analogous; as I observed before, a middleman is more in the capacity of a small manufacturer; frequently the goods he brings in are not paid the price that he takes the work out for; if a workman has not made them so well as they ought to be made, he takes a less price for them, precisely in the same way as if he tendered the article for sale.

1797. Are all the persons that you employ under a system of frame-rent, or are a part of them under the net system?—They are all on the system of frame-rent; most of them are scattered through the country villages on the old principle.

1798. In a slack time is it your habit to stint the work, and take the full rent for the frame?—No, not to take the full rent.

1799. But it is not an uncommon practice, is it?—I only know from hearsay.

1800. Is it not generally understood in the trade that that is the practice; at all events the stinting of work and taking full rent is not an uncommon practice?—I believe it is a common practice, though, as I observed before, I speak only from hearsay.

1801. Would it not, in your opinion, be desirable that there should be some compulsory power which should prevent that which is so great a fraud upon the workmen?—Yes; if you can legislate upon it, it would be desirable to prevent fraud by all means.

1802. Sir *H. Halford.*] I think your mode of carrying on business is on frames of your own?—Yes.

1803. Employing middlemen?—Only in some cases.

1804. Have you any security that middlemen so employed will not have frames of their own?—They generally have frames of their own; they have generally a greater number of their own than they have of the manufacturers.

1805. Then they have an inducement to spread the materials you supply them with, over frames of their own?—That, I have heard, has been the case; I cannot speak to it of my own knowledge.

1806. The materials you supply them with are designed to be worked up on your own frames?—As a rule.

1807. But you have no security that they may not be distributed over other frames belonging to the middlemen?—Of course, they may be; as long as the frames are let out we have no control over the workmen; that is one of the difficulties in the business. When trade is good, we find it operates very much against us; as when we have orders waiting to be executed, it frequently happens that instead of a large bag of work coming in, a small one comes. The reason is this, that they perhaps are getting a greater amount of wages from another warehouse, and it operates against producing the same quantity of work as you would have if trade was bad; when trade is bad they will produce a larger quantity.

1808. If that practice is resorted to, it would involve, of course, a great abatement of wages to each workman?—It does at that period.

1809. Mr. *Mundy.*] What is the inducement to a workman to work for one person more than another?—When trade is good, and the work is given out at distant places, they have offers made to them of something more per dozen; consequently the manufacturer, though he employs his own frames, has no command over them.

1810. They receive an additional remuneration from another party?—They get better wages.

1811. Although they work in the same frames?—Yes, although they work in the same frames.

1812. *Chairman.*] Are there not two distinct principles in the trade quite distinct from each other, one the manufacture of hosiery, and the other the rent of the frame; and is it not the case that in times of good trade reliance is placed on the profit derived from the manufacture of hosiery, and in times of bad trade

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the profit is relied on from the rent of the frame?—Yes, I believe that is carried on to a considerable extent.

1813. In times of good trade there is a reliance for profit on the hosiery, but when trade is bad the hosiery is not thought about, but the principal reliance is on the profit from the frame?—It is so in many cases, though it does not apply to the more respectable manufacturers.

1814. But that is a custom practised in the trade?—No doubt of it.

1815. Then in times of good trade it follows that the profit upon hosiery is both for the benefit of the frameowner and the workman; but when trade is bad, the profit being on the frame, is for the benefit of the frame-owner?—It tells both ways; I know instances in which manufacturers have lost money by having frames when trade has been in a bad state; they have employed them for the sake of the frame-rent when they have not been able to obtain a sale for their goods.

1816. But has it not answered to them better that they should not get so good a profit from the hosiery so long as they do not lose the rent of the frame?—That has been acted upon, no doubt, by many persons.

1817. The rent of the frame, then, in bad times is the principal object of giving the framework-knitters employment?—No doubt of it.

1818. Sir *H. Halford.*] Suppose the case of a middleman having frames of his own, would it not be to his interest to take out work at a very low price indeed, in order that he might still obtain rent for his frames?—Yes; there is, no doubt, an inducement for him to take work out, but still I am not aware of that being done from my own experience. A pretty general and regular price is given, for all sorts of work, and I am not aware that those men do take work out at a much less price than that which is given to others.

1819. You are not prepared to say they do not?—No.

1820. Is it not natural to suspect that they may?—I can only judge as another individual might, not connected with the trade, that they might do so, but from my own experience I am not aware that they do.

1821. Mr. *Ingham.*] The result of that would be, that it gives employment to persons who otherwise would have nothing to do, by taking it out at a less price; instead of letting the frame stand idle they give employment to framework-knitters, who otherwise would be without the means of getting their bread?—No doubt it would be so in the case you put.

1822. Is there any mode which you can devise for permanently bettering the condition of these workmen except by permanently increasing their employment?—That is a difficult question to answer. I said at first that the question was beset with so many difficulties that I could not see the remedy so clearly as I saw the difficulties.

1823. Anything that could either increase the demand in the trade, or supply other branches of employment to those engaged in it, would incontestably be doing the workmen good?—No doubt it would be a benefit if you could withdraw some of them from the trade.

1824. The project of preventing them from letting out frames would withdraw them from the trade, by preventing the possibility of employing them to the same extent as they are employed now?—Are you referring to the proposition to pass an Act to prevent frames from being let out in great numbers.

1825. That I understand to be the case?—I am not aware that it would prevent them from being let out.

1826. Not if they take no rent for them; who would let out a frame if he was to receive no rent for it?—But it would be obtained upon the goods.

1827. Who from?—A remuneration for the use of the frame would be obtained in some other way.

1828. In what other way?—If rent was not charged, it would be obtained by paying so much less per dozen upon the goods.

1829. Then the rent must either be charged in stoppage, or a less amount of payment must be given to the men for the work they do?—Yes; or, in other words, the manufacturer must place so much upon his goods, which is about the same thing.

1830. Whether he can get that depends upon the customer and competition?—Yes.

1831. You say he must either have the stoppage, or must compensate himself for the use of the frame by reducing the price he pays for the goods?—If trade will not warrant a higher price for the goods, he must reduce the price he pays to

the workmen; if trade is good, the price would remain the same, and the manufacturer would lay his compensation on the goods.

1832. When trade is bad he must either continue to receive his rent or reduce the price he pays for the goods?—I can only answer that question as I have answered it before.

1833. Does not the rate of wages the workmen get now, after those deductions have been made, leave them very close upon destitution?—It is exceedingly low; it is grievous to think of the low state of wages.

1834. Do you think it practicable to reduce the wages much lower than they are now?—It would amount to about the same thing; if frame-rents were abolished and bad trade continued, there would be so much charged in some way for the use of the frames; the frame itself has been spoken of as being of small value, but it is a very expensive thing to keep in repair; the repairs are frequently more than the value of the frame.

1835. Do you think that any alteration in the mode in which the compensation is to be made, as by a reduction in the price received rather than by the stoppages, could have any effect in improving the condition of the workmen themselves?—I am not prepared to say that it would materially; it would in some cases, there is no doubt; but taking it as a whole it is a question, the results of which must be very uncertain.

1836. It has been said that there are two principles of profit or return to which the manufacturer looks, one legitimate, from the price of the hosiery, and the other incorrect, from the rent of his frame; is it not the case, that when a capitalist has to consider what use he will put his money to he looks not entirely to what he can get during those parts of the year when trade is good, but how he can prevent or diminish his loss when trade is slack?—Yes.

1837. Is there then anything incorrect in saying "when trade is good, I draw a return for my capital in the price the customers give, and when trade is bad, I rather look to a return from the rent of my frames;" are they not both legitimate means of getting a profit on his capital?—So long as frames or machinery are considered capital there can be no doubt of that.

1838. If you interfered by law you would be preventing a man from getting a return for his capital, supposing the effect of that law to be to prevent him from getting a rent for his frame; is not that so?—Yes, that would be the case so long as frames are considered capital.

1839. Can you consider frames as anything else but capital?—No.

1840. *Chairman.*] Does not the frame-rent system tend to an unnatural glut of hosiery in the market?—It has done so.

1841. Is it your opinion that if frame-rents were abolished there would not be that glut of hosiery in the market which there is under the existing system?—That must depend on other circumstances; the hosiery trade is like all other trades; it has its ebbs and flows, the same thing applies, in a great measure, to other branches of manufacture where there is not the same kind of machinery in use.

1842. But if the obtaining rent for frames induces a manufacturer to create a larger stock of hosiery than is wanted, does not that tend unnaturally to glut the market with a larger amount of hosiery than is healthy for the trade?—Yes, it has done so repeatedly, and forced those goods into the market at reduced prices.

1843. Then the obtaining money by the rent of frames has, to that extent, been injurious to the manufacturer?—It has been, no doubt, under those circumstances.

1844. Sir *H. Halford.*] Allow me to call your attention to a question and answer in the evidence of Mr. Felkin of Nottingham, taken before the Commissioner; he is asked, "You have stated that there are frames not the property of the hosier; has this circumstance anything to do with depression of wages? These frames are ordinarily first stopped in bad times, and last set on in a revival of trade. The effort to get even partial employment for them has often been so great as to induce the middle-masters, in whose hands many of them are, to take out work at gradually decreasing rates; or if not taken out at less prices, to give it out in scanty amounts, and for less than the regular wages; in fact, by working this lever in any state of the trade when labour is not absolutely scarce, there need be no limit to the depression of wages, except the good feeling of the employer, and the incapacity or unwillingness of the employed to approach nearer to the

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point where, to work is not more gainful than to be idle." Do you assent to the accuracy of that?—I think there is a great deal of truth in that answer, as far as I can judge from the mere reading of it; but it requires looking carefully over before I should be called upon to answer.

1845. Do you think that, in a depressed condition of trade, the owner of capital invested in machinery has a right to exact a full return for that capital, while the workman is depressed to the lowest point with regard to his wages; ought he not decidedly to share the effects of the depression with the workmen?—I think he does, as a rule, by only taking rent in proportion to the amount of work the man takes out.

1846. But if he continues to exact full frame-rent whilst wages are indefinitely depressed, is not that taking to himself a larger share of the distribution between profits and wages than he is entitled to?—I am not aware that it is adopted as a rule; it is not adopted as a rule, I believe, among manufacturers. In my own case, during the time trade has been bad, workmen have been paid in proportion to the amount of money they have earned, instead of as to the number of frames they worked.

1847. With regard to the middlemen, the possessors of frames; do you imagine that that is invariably the practice with them?—Of course, I can only speak from report; I have heard of many bad cases, but I should judge those are the exceptions.

1848. But those exceptions, to whatever degree they prevail, are occasioned by the facility for obtaining rent by stoppage from wages; is not that so?—No doubt of it.

1849. *Chairman.*] Has not every manufacturer (you, no doubt, are an honourable exception,) the power of exacting, if he pleases, full rent for his frame and stinting the work?—You mean, full power by law?

1850. Yes?—If a workman of mine were to say, "I shall not allow you to take full rent, because I have not had full work;" I think I could not legally demand it.

1851. But it is very generally the custom with many manufacturers, is it not?—I think, as I have observed before, that the instances in which it may have occurred are the exceptions. I think that, as a rule, frame-rents are not taken, except when full work is given out.

1852. If a manufacturer were to demand full rent, and not give sufficient employment for the week, and if the full rent were deducted at the end of the week, would the framework-knitter have any redress?—That is a legal question.

1853. Is it not done every day by different manufacturers; I do not say by you; you are an honourable exception to the other portion of the trade, and do not do it; but is it not a matter of notoriety that it is done?—I should be sorry to say I know it is done, because I do not; I have only heard of these cases the same as you have heard them yourselves.

1854. Mr. *Mundy.*] But you cannot say it is not done?—I have no power of saying it is not done.

1855. *Chairman.*] Is it not commonly understood that it is done?—I really do not like to speak of things I do not know; I have already stated that I have heard it.

1856. We quite well understand that it is not your custom, but wish to ask whether you do not know it to be a common practice among some manufacturers in Leicester?—As I have observed before, I have heard so; I have heard as you yourselves have heard it; I have read in the local papers of such things; but I should hope, as I have before observed, that they are the exceptions.

1857. Sir *H. Halford.*] Taking them as exceptional cases, would not the result be, that a person resorting to these objectionable practices would be able to undersell the fair manufacturer?—No doubt of it.

1858. And would not the effect of that be generally to depress the trade?—No doubt, as far as it goes, it must depress the trade, for it produces goods at a reduced price.

1859. Mr. *Biggs.*] You think the frame-rent system is liable to abuse?—No doubt of it; I have seen that for years, as I observed at the commencement of my evidence.

1860. But you think that if frame-rents were taken off, there would be a reduction in the gross wages, because there must be some consideration given for the

the use of the frame?—There must be a consideration to some extent, probably not upon the present per-centage. Frames, according to their present value, when kept regularly in work, pay a large per-centage. I do not expect that any large per-centage of that sort would be obtained upon the goods.

1861. If frame-rents were abolished by Act of Parliament, you would expect that a consideration would be given for the use of those frames in some other way?—Yes; the frames being considered capital, there must of necessity be a return for that capital.

1862. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you see any connexion between a legislative enactment simply making an alteration in the mode in which the payment of wages is made in Leicester, and an improved condition of the workmen?—I should think the condition of the workmen would be improved if a legislative enactment could be so framed as to be operative.

1863. You are of opinion, then, that if frame rents are abolished by Act of Parliament, the earnings of the working people in Leicester will be increased?—It would do away with those cases of oppression to which reference has been made, and it would also cause great numbers of the work-people, who now have their frames scattered throughout the country, to be deprived of those frames.

1864. Why do those cases of oppression you speak of exist; why are they not resisted?—I expect they are not resisted from the inability of parties to cope with them.

1865. Why do you think the parties are unable to cope with them?—In consequence of their being obliged to submit to the condition of taking work out.

1866. And why are they obliged to submit to that condition?—In consequence of their poverty.

1867. In consequence, I suppose, of there being a very small demand for their labour in proportion to the supply?—Exactly.

1868. Do you think that an alteration of the mode in which the payment of wages is made, will increase the demand for their labour?—No, I cannot see how it would increase the demand for their labour.

1869. Do you think that anything but an increase in the demand for their labour can improve their condition?—If a legislative enactment could be carried out and be operative, it would greatly lessen the number of the working classes engaged in the hosiery trade scattered throughout the country villages; they must obtain work in agricultural pursuits; no manufacturer would let a frame out to hands who only work occasionally. Every manufacturer investing his capital in machinery would look for a quantity of goods to be made, and would not allow women and other people working only occasionally, and making but a small quantity, to have his frames.

1870. The result then of a legislative interference with the payment of wages in the hosiery trade would be, to throw out of employment a certain number of persons who are employed in that trade at present?—Yes, those scattered throughout the country villages.

1871. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think the power of recovering the rents of frames by stoppage from wages essential; suppose such an Act should be passed as that which has been proposed, leaving to the owners of frames a remedy by the ordinary process of law, but not allowing the stoppage of wages; would that, in your opinion, materially interfere with the conduct of the hosiery business?—I am not able to give an answer to that question. I have not considered that point.

1872. Mr. *Mundy.*] You have given rather a hesitating opinion as to the probability of an improvement in the condition of the workmen by the abolition of frame rent; how would it operate with regard to the independent frames owned by parties not connected with the trade?—Those frames probably would be withdrawn from the market, or would have to be disposed of to the manufacturers. A manufacturer most likely under those circumstances would have his own machinery.

1873. Mr. *Biggs.*] I understand you to say that you think the result of legislation on this subject is problematical altogether?—If, as I observed before, an Act of Parliament could be framed which would be operative, it might be of service; but I see so many difficulties surrounding the question with regard to the letting the frames out through the country, that I cannot say. I can see the difficulties, and I can see the uses and abuses of the system, but I am not prepared to recommend the cure. I would rather leave that in the hands of the Legislature to consider well.

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1874. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think the cure is to be found in legislation?—I would rather leave it in the hands of the Legislature. There are, no doubt, many abuses attached to the system; but with regard to the cure of those abuses I would leave it in the hands of the Legislature, who can take a comprehensive view after reading the evidence.

1875. You would prefer, in fact, that the Legislature should take it upon itself to direct you in the way in which you are to carry on your business?—No, I did not say so.

1876. I understood you to say you preferred leaving it in the hands of the Legislature?—As to whether they could cure the evils that must be admitted on all hands to exist.

1877. But the question I wished to ask you was, whether you think it is a matter with which the Legislature can interfere practically; the effect of the interference of the Legislature would be to dictate to you the manner in which you are to carry on your business, so far as the payment of wages is concerned; do you desire that interference; do you think it would be beneficial or otherwise?—I should not object to a legislative interference, provided it could be adapted to meet the case, and provided it could be so framed as to be operative; I should not object to it myself; I should not be opposed in my own feelings to it.

1878. By "an Act which would be operative," you mean an Act which would hold water; which would be equal, and which would be strictly and literally carried out?—Exactly so; it would be of no use having an Act of Parliament that could be evaded immediately.

1879. Suppose the Legislature were to pass an Act for the abolition of frame rent, and that it was most rigidly carried out, and no such thing as a frame rent was ever taken afterwards, is it your opinion, as a man of business, that the wages of the workmen would be permanently increased by such an Act?—You simply ask my opinion; I have before said that legislative interference would, as far as stocking-makers are concerned, throw a great many of the frames out of employment that are scattered through the country, and would produce, in consequence of a less quantity of goods being made, a better state of things in the towns, and to the grown-up hands: those frames which are scattered throughout the country are generally worked by women and children; the husband frequently is a labouring man.

1880. Mr. *Biggs.*] I understand you to say, that in the transition from the present to a net system, there would be considerable suffering, but that in the long run the trade would be improved?—The trade would be improved.

1881. *Chairman.*] Is it not the case, that when trade is bad the weak hands are those who are employed, and the best hands are those who are thrown out of employment?—As far as my own experience goes, I should say, decidedly not.

1882. I thought you said that the women and children were those who were employed?—Yes; but to the question that you ask I would reply in this way: when trade is bad we want as good work as possible, and we always turn off the worst hands first.

1883. Is it not the custom, when trade is bad, to employ slow hands, in order not to get too large a quantity of goods manufactured, and at the same time to get the frame rent?—That question has been answered, I am aware, here, in the affirmative. The fact is, that although I said the frames throughout the country villages are frequently worked in by women and families, it does not follow, that because they are women they are the worst hands; they make as good work, but their work is uncertain. I have known women not come to us for three or four months; I have worsted out now that has been out for a long time; the woman who has it has not been to us for several months; she will work it up to suit her own convenience.

1884. But the frame rent goes on all the while?—Yes; in the way that has been mentioned, and I have often complained of it, and said that I wish she would give the frame up in consequence of getting so much in arrear with her rent.

1885. She goes on slowly with her work, and pays the full rent, as a quick hand would?—She has not paid the rent for a long time; she has not paid the full rent.

1886. Not to you?—No.

1887. That is not in consequence of the custom, but in consequence of your forbearance?—She has not done the work for it; and it is frequently the case that they will keep work out for a long time.

1888. That

1888. That is in consequence of your forbearance; if you were determined to exact the full rent, you could have done it, could you not, for she has been at work, though working slowly?—Yes.

1889. Mr. *Ingham.*] She has not come to any settlement with you?—No.

1890. Then you have not had an opportunity of making the deduction?—No.

1891. When you say women are slow workers, is that because they are interrupted?—Yes; many of the country hands are men or women who go out to field-work; when we give work out to them, there is very little dependence to be placed on the quantity they will produce.

1892. Although they turn out but little work, that is not from inexpertness, is it, but because they do not continue to work steadily at it?—They only work part of their time.

1893. But there is no intentional selection of slow workers and inexpert hands; you never make a choice of that kind?—I never do so.

1894. Do you think that any person, from preference, would put the work into the hands of a clumsy person who would not turn it out in good style?—It is contrary to the nature of things; we have been obliged, when trade has been good, to employ inferior hands to get a larger quantity made.

1895. *Chairman.*] But is it not the custom when trade is bad, not so much to care about the work as to get the frames employed?—That may be the case with the middlemen; but I should think it is not the case usually with the manufacturers.

1896. But the evil exists as regards the workmen; does that evil exist by reason of the conduct of the middlemen?—I can only state what I know from hearsay.

1897. Do you think that the middlemen that you employ act in that manner; do you think your middlemen would give out a small quantity of work in order to get full rent?—Not as far as my frames go.

1898. Would you know anything about it, supposing the middlemen you employ did act in that manner?—I should know if they did it in the case of my own frames.

1899. If they give partial employment, and take full rent, how would you know it, supposing they were to act so with regard to the framework-knitters they employed?—I could not tell for a certainty, I could only form an opinion by the work brought in; there is a certain knowledge which every manufacturer has of goods that enables him to detect matters of that sort.

1900. You cannot tell whether a certain quantity of work has been done in a week or a fortnight, can you?—If a man brings his work in weekly or fortnightly, and it amounts to about the same; we know pretty well if they are made all from the same yarn; we can tell how many are made off one frame, and how many off another; it is almost impossible for two men to make goods so that we cannot perceive the difference in the work.

1901. Supposing your middleman spreads the work not merely over your frames but over others that he has from other parties, can you tell whether he spreads your work that you give out over more hands than you give him out work for?—I can form a pretty good opinion upon looking the work through.

1902. Mr. *Ingham.*] You have given out work, we will say, to be done upon six frames?—Yes.

1903. And, according to the supposition, he, in order to give employment to other frames, divides that work among 12 frames?—Yes.

1904. Can you tell, when the work comes back, that the sample sent to you is the produce of 12 frames?—If work has been done in 12 frames, it will be irregular; and in that case we should perceive at once, that 12 different hands had been at work.

1905. *Chairman.*] If the work came in so, should you object to it?—Certainly; the goods would not be of so much value.

1906. Mr. *Mundy.*] And you would make a deduction?—I should throw the worst out.

1907. On his hands?—Yes; I have frequently returned them in those cases; when I find a dozen or two not so good as others, I lay them on one side, and he has the offer either to take them back, or to take a reduced price for them.

1908. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think the workmen are acquainted generally with the price paid at the warehouse for the work?—As a rule they are.

1909. Suppose a workman were to apply at the warehouse to obtain the

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information, should you think yourself bound to give it him?—Yes; I have done so.

1910. *Chairman.*] Do you ever give a ticket out with your work, in order that the middleman may be able to show what your terms are?—Yes; we usually do so.

1911. Is that your general habit?—The general habit is to put down on a piece of paper the work he has to make for the week, with the gauge of the worsted, and generally the number of leads.

1912. Sir *H. Halford.*] So that you comply with the provisions of the Ticket Act in fact?—Only on a more simple scale than that; the difference is that the master is not obliged to show his journeymen the paper.

1913. You do not require that of him?—No; I think your Act was compulsory, was it not.

1914. That was the principle of it; that the workman should have a right to be informed of the price paid at the warehouse?—The ticket is simply given by the manufacturer as a guide for what he gives out to make for the next week.

1915. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have spoken of the practice of taking frame rents having a tendency to glut the market in bad times?—Yes.

1916. Does not the same tendency go on in all other manufactures?—Yes, I have stated so before; but I also, with regard to the framework-knitting, stated that the frames being scattered over the country, as they are, the abolition of frame rent would draw those frames in, inasmuch as no manufacturer would allow a frame to be out at an uncertainty as to the amount of work he should receive, if he could not claim frame rent for the use of that frame; for instance, if frame rents were abolished, and I were to let a frame, I should naturally expect that the man to whom I let it would produce so many dozens a week.

1917. You would not work that frame at all under a net system?—If there was a net system, I should expect that the larger the contract of goods he made, the better it would be for me.

1918. *Chairman.*] Is there anything further that you wish to state to the Committee?—Yes; it has been stated, this morning, that very large stoppages have been made when a man has had to alter his frame, and that full rent has been taken by the middleman at the end of the week; that I consider a very hard case upon the journeyman, and I should hope that that is the exception, and not the rule. No instance ever came within my own knowledge in which such an advantage was taken.

Mr. *Isaac Abbott*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *Isaac Abbott.*

1919. ARE you a framework-knitter at Earl Shilton, in the county of Leicester?—Yes.

1920. What branch of the trade are you employed in?—I have been lately employed in the wrought hose, the wide wrought hose branch; but I hold none of the frames now; I have parted with them recently; I hold one narrow frame, in which my wife does a little work; that is the only one I have.

1921. Who are you working for?—She is working for Mr. Evered, who succeeded the late Mr. Wileman.

1922. You have no frames now yourself?—Only one that I was entering on two days ago, to do a little work in in another man's shop; about six days' work; but I have no prospect beyond that. I have been employed the last four or five weeks on out-door work, under Lady Byron; but I have finished that work; we were knocked off, a dozen of us.

1923. At present you have nothing to do?—Except the little work I have named.

1924. Your wife is working a frame?—She is doing a little in a frame, and but a little.

1925. Her frame is Mr. Everard's?—Yes.

1926. What is the weekly rent that she pays for it?—One shilling.

1927. Do they find her regular employment for the frame?—Yes, she has been pretty regularly employed since she has worked to him, but that is only about two months; it was a frame in which my boy worked; I had the frame for him, but he did not make the work to suit, and I got the employer to let my wife have the frame.

1928. How long is it since you had employment in the frame yourself?—A week or two before Easter, I believe.

1929. Were

1929. Were you employed by Mr. Everard?—Up to that time.

1930. And how long had you been employed by him?—From about last October, or some time rather before that; some time in the autumn, I think it was.

1931. Had you full work given out to you during the time you were employed for him?—Yes; I had nothing to complain of in shortness of employment during the time I worked for him.

1932. How long did you work for Mr. Wileman?—I have worked to him for many years, on several occasions. I worked to him and left him, and went to him again, for several years; perhaps eight or ten altogether.

1933. Have you ever had any experience of having short work, and full rent taken for your frame?—Not recently, excepting one week; one week in Easter. My wife got a little work out in the middle of the week, but she would have had it out on the Monday morning, if the warehouseman had acted in accordance with the instructions given him by the master; but he not feeling willing to give the work on the Monday morning, kept it back till Wednesday; and when she took in the work, amounting to 2*s.* 4½*d.*, a shilling was deducted for rent; and had the work been done in another man's shop, she would have been subject to further charge as well for seaming: the amount she had to receive was very trifling indeed.

1934. Was her gross earning for the week 2*s.* 4½*d.*?—That was all.

1935. And a shilling of that was taken for the frame rent?—Yes, and 3½*d.* for seaming; and 6*d.* more she would have had to pay, by the same rule, for standing and taking in, if she had been at another man's shop.

1936. What were the deductions upon that 2*s.* 4½*d.*?—It would be 1*s.* 9½*d.*, I believe, and perhaps a penny or three-halfpence for incidental expenses: about 1*s.* 10*d.*, I might say, would have been the charges that might have been taken, if she had done the work in another man's shop.

1937. What were the deductions that were made?—The deduction that was made was 1*s.* 3½*d.*, including only the frame rent and seaming.

1938. Leaving only 13 *d.* for net wages for herself?—Yes.

1939. Mr. *Gardner.*] Thirteen pence was all she really earned in the week?—Yes.

1940. What is the general system with the framework-knitters in Earl Shilton; is it to pay frame rent?—Yes.

1941. There is no system of what is called, in Leicester, net rent?—No; there is no single exception to that rule.

1942. Do any of them work for hosiers in Hinckley?—Yes, several of them.

1943. And is the general system in both Earl Shilton and Hinckley, to deduct frame rents and other stoppages?—I believe it is; I never heard of any other system; I believe that system prevails throughout the district.

1944. Does it work satisfactorily to the operatives in Earl Shilton?—They frequently have to complain of the amount of rent and charges that they have to pay upon their small earnings; their earnings are very small indeed in our district, perhaps lower than in any other part of the country; I should say they are, because there is a great deal of low-priced work made there.

1945. Have they any option as to whether they will submit to these deductions from their earnings or not?—No; the only option they have would be, either to submit or lose their work; that is the only choice they have.

1946. Sir *H. Halford.*] You were examined by the Commissioner when he was inquiring into this subject about 10 years ago?—I was.

1947. You gave an account of the great depression in the trade at that time?—Perhaps I might.

1948. Has there been any improvement in it since then?—In the villages do you mean.

1949. In the condition of the framework-knitters in general?—No; there has been a continual decline in the amount of wages; they have been continually going down, either through wages being directly reduced, or through an extra amount of quality being put into the work, for which they give no remuneration.

1950. You made a statement to the Commissioner, with regard to 185 workmen, to the effect, that the total amount of their wages was 29 *l.* 12*s.* 2½*d.*, giving an average of 3*s.* 2½*d.* per frame, clear of all charges and deductions?—Yes.

1951. Do you mean to say that there is a greater depression now than there

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was then; that the average of wages is less now than it was at that time?—Decidedly so; I will refer to one particular kind of work to bear out my statement; but you must allow me to go a few years farther back; I must go 12 or 14 years back; for the same article that we have got 5*s.* a dozen for manufacturing, we now get something like 4*s.*, or not so much; and I believe that the article is now made better at 4*s.* than it was when 5*s.* was paid in our district 12 or 14 years ago.

1952. What is the relative amount of the frame rents; still less, or more, or the same?—The rents remain the same; the rents have increased in our district during the last 30 years from 9*d.* to 1*s.*, while the price of the machinery has been decreasing.

1953. At that time you complained a good deal of the payment of wages in provisions?—We had a deal of it then.

1954. Is that system practised now?—It is carried out too extensively in the place now.

1955. As extensively as it used to be?—Not much less, I think; one or two truck-masters have declined in consequence of some informations that were laid against them; but others have taken their places, and I think we have as many, if not more truck-masters at the present moment in the village, as we had at the time to which your question refers.

1956. Are the workmen compelled to take provisions in payment of wages?—They are not absolutely compelled to do so in one sense, but they are in another; there is an understanding between the hand and his master, that if he does not take out goods for his work, he will lose his work altogether, and be thrown out of employment, so that he is in one sense compelled to take out goods; that is one of the greatest evils connected with the trade.

1957. There has been information, I understand you to say, with regard to the practice of truck?—Yes.

1958. Lately?—Not recently; it is several years, I believe, since there was an information laid; the men became intimidated, and persecuted to a certain extent by the manufacturers in the district. A man who laid an information against his master for the purpose of putting down the truck system, would be thrown out of employment, and there being few but truck-masters, he had a difficulty in getting employment again, so that it had a tendency to check a feeling which had manifested itself against the truck system in our district.

1959. Do the middlemen keep shops now in many instances?—Yes; that may be the reason why there are so many of them, because there are no informations; but I suppose they are induced to keep the shops for the sake of the profits they realise in the sale of their articles, and for the purpose of carrying on their trade with a smaller capital.

1960. That is the practice now, I understand you to say?—Yes.

1961. But informations were laid against some parties?—Yes.

1962. And what was the effect of that?—It caused a few of them to give up selling goods, but their places have been supplied, as I have said before, by new manufacturers, who have been induced to enter the trade for the sake of the profits which are to be realised from frame rents and the sale of goods.

1963. The two being combined in the same person?—Yes.

1964. *Chairman.*] Do you know any instances in Earl Shilton, of the frame rent being exacted, when the framework-knitter has been ill?—Yes.

1965. Has that been at all frequent?—Yes, a woman that I saw about a fortnight or three weeks ago, told me that she was laid up with a bad wrist, and could do no work for six weeks; her frame went into the shop to be repaired, it was in the shop a fortnight; in the seventh week she had done 10 pairs of 5% stockings, which amounted to 4*s.* 2*d* ; she took them in to her employer, who was a truck-master, and a farmer as well; and he stopped the whole 4*s.* 2*d.* for rent, and said he should have the other 10*d.*; he demanded five weeks' rent, there being seven weeks gone, and the frame having been in the smith's shop a fortnight; but there was not work enough to pay the 5*s.*, so he took the whole 4*s.* 2*d.*, and said he should have the other 10*d.* in work; the woman grew angry, and some words ensued, and as a separation was likely to take place, he consented to forego the 10*d.*, so that she did not have to pay it; but she had to pay 4¼ *d.* for the seaming of her stockings out of her own pocket, either then or when she had done more work.

1966. Then there was some rent exacted during the time she was sick?—She was

was sick for five weeks; she did the work in the seventh week, but as five weeks had gone for which the manufacturer thought himself entitled to rent, he demanded 5 *s.*, and the work only coming to 4 *s.* 2 *d.*, he could not take it all.

1967. But he took some portion?—He took all she had earned.

1968. How long is that ago?—It may be six or seven weeks; it is a fortnight or three weeks since she related it to me.

1969. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say this man was a farmer?—Yes, there are farmers and shoemakers, and frame-smiths, and a variety of tradesmen who have entered into the hosiery trade in our place, in a small way.

1970. These anecdotes which you have told us shows very disgraceful conduct on the part of the owner of the frame, but was it much talked about at the time?—I am not prepared to say, but I should rather think it was, because one or two individuals told me to call on the woman to hear what she had to say; I think, therefore, that it had been talked of in the neighbourhood.

1971. *Chairman.*] Is this sort of dealing frequent?—I believe so; we have two manufacturers; the two principal manufacturers in the place, who form honourable exceptions to the system of taking rent in cases of sickness, one is Mr. Homer and the other is Mr. Everard.

1972. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say that the trade has been continually declining, and that the average gains of the workmen are less now than they were in 1844, when the inquiry took place before the Commissioner?—Yes.

1973. What has been the reason why, the trade being bad and continually declining, you have remained in it?—I am hardly prepared to say what may have been the real cause, but for my own part I should attribute it mainly to a rapid increase of machinery, in the wide branch in particular.

1974. Mr. *Gardner.*] You mean improved machinery?—No, not exactly; wide machinery, on which what we call spurious articles have been manufactured: and during the last year or 15 months, perhaps, there has been some improved machinery made, on which the real wrought article has been manufactured.

1975. Mr. *Ingham.*] But my question was what was the reason why you yourself have continued to stick to this employment if it has yielded such very small returns?—I have had nothing else to take to; I get away when I can, as I have been recently.

1976. How have you been employed recently?—Under Lady Byron.

1977. In what kind of work?—Digging.

1978. Do you think there is any likelihood of persons getting such work as you have been employed in lately, so as to enable them to get better wages than they can get as framework-knitters?—There is a difficulty in it; it is only occasionally that we have a chance of getting employment under Lady Byron; she is the only person that we have a chance of getting employment under.

1979. In truth, bad and scanty as the reward for your labour is in the hosiery trade, you know of no other employment at which you could get anything better?—No; I know of nothing else I could turn my hand to, unless I could get to work on the land, and the farmers are not willing to take stocking-makers as labourers; they believe they are not able to do the work.

1980. Suppose there was a change in the trade, by which those who now get partial work were to be thrown out of work entirely; how do you think they could be provided for?—I know of no other way than by their being thrown upon the ratepayers. That is supposing the worst case. I see no necessity for anticipating such a consequence; as the small manufacturers having timely notice of the change, might dispose of their machinery without causing much loss of time to their workmen.

1981. You do not see any mode at present of their getting profitable employment?—I do not, supposing them to be thrown out.

1982. *Chairman.*] There is employment to be obtained in the summer, is there not, in the fields, when agricultural labour is scarce?—During the harvest months.

1983. Mr. *Ingham.*] Is winter a slack or a brisk time with stocking-makers?—Generally it is supposed to be a brisk time in our branch, up to April.

1984. Your slack time comes on after that?—Generally, I think.

1985. You have at present a good many hose hands at that period of the year?—Yes.

1986. Is there enough even at that time of the year to give employment to all these hose hands in country work?—Yes; I think they are generally fully employed when trade is good.

 1987. But

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1987. But you say trade is slack in the summer?—Yes.

1988. Is there plenty of agricultural employment to give occupation to you when the trade is slack?—Decidedly not.

1989. Then if you are to be turned out of work in the winter, when there is but little to be done in the fields, there would be no employment for you at all?—It rarely occurs that we are out in the winter time.

1990. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think that the House of Commons can do anything for you to better your condition?—I think that if a legislative enactment were to abolish the taking of rents and charges, some good would result from it, because it would operate, in my opinion, in keeping many little men out of the trade, who are so ingenious in running down wages, as I consider; as I said before, we have many little men in our village who have entered the trade, such as farmers, shoemakers, framesmiths, and others.

1991. These little men employ hands, do they not?—Yes, they employ hands; but it too often happens that they employ those hands which are the least able to work, the worst hands; I mean by that, not those who make the worst work, but the slowest of hands; and they employ them merely for the sake of the rents which they get from the machines, especially in slack times.

1992. But what would become of these slow hands if they were not so employed, because you have just told us that you, an intelligent man, have the greatest difficulty yourself in getting occasional employment out of the trade?—Many of them are hands that ought not to be at work; aged men, women, boys, and girls; those who cannot do a deal of work; those are the hands; another thing which operates most against the worker is, that the class of manufacturers, of which I am now speaking, generally purchase the worst of frames, because they get them for the least money; many of their frames would not average in value more than 50 *s.* or 3 *l.* a frame, and they have as much rent for the use of those frames, as if they cost double that amount; their object seems to be to carry on their trade with as much machinery as possible, and to seek out the slowest of the hands to work those frames for the purpose of securing the rents; that seems to be the motive by which they are influenced.

1993. And these slow hands get of course a very little for themselves after paying the exorbitant charges that are exacted from them?—Very little.

1994. But they are content to take these wretched wages because they do not see any mode of improving their condition?—They take them, but they do so with a very small degree of contentment.

1995. But have you any alternative to suggest?—None but the abolition of rents and charges by Act of Parliament.

1996. I can perfectly understand your wife being extremely discontented at working a whole week for 1 *s.* 1 *d.*; but suppose the alternative of no work or 1 *s.* 1 *d.* were offered to her, which would she accept?—Of course the 1 *s.* 1 *d.*

1997. Mr. *Ingham.*] When trade is brisk, how much would your family be able to earn in a month?—I am hardly prepared to say.

1998. I do not mean your family particularly, but any family like yours?—I have a list of names, with the amount of their earnings, and my family is included in it.

1999. You have told us what it is in bad times, but taking the last 12 months, what have been the best wages you have made?—I have not been fully employed the last 12 months: part of the time I held a number of glove frames of a Leicester hosier, and I gave those frames up in consequence of having no work; I held them six or eight months without a bit of work, and at last I parted with them altogether; when they were at work my boy and girl were working them, but their earnings were very scanty, though the rents were excessive.

2000. I want to know what a man in your position can earn in what you call good times?—The earnings of the working men in our trade vary very much; some men are very ready men.

2001. Can you state what would be the earnings of a ready man in a good time?—It would depend on what frame he was working in; but I will give you the earnings of a good hand in a narrow frame; he would earn, I should say, from 10 *s.* to 12 *s.* a week.

2002. Sir *H. Halford.*] Supposing him to be constantly employed?—Yes.

2003. Mr. *Ingham.*] Would he earn more in a wide than he would in a narrow frame?—I think he would earn a little more; I have not been much used to wide frames myself.

2004. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there any wide frames at Earl Shilton?—Yes; I waited on the master of a small factory for a list of the earnings of his men in wide frames, and he gave me the list a few days ago.

2005. You say that some people pursue the truck system now, although it is contrary to the law, and that other persons comply with the law, and have given up the truck system?—Yes.

2006. Does not that rather discourage the hope of doing anything effectual in this case?—There are two who have given up the truck system.

2007. You hope, that if there is a law passed with reference to this matter, it will be better observed than the law against truck?—Yes, I do.

2008. Are there more wide or narrow frames in Earl Shilton?—The number of wide frames has increased very much of late, but there is the largest number of narrow frames.

2009. But the narrow frames continue to be employed?—Yes, the wide frames are nearly all still at present.

2010. The value of a narrow frame, I think, you say is about 50 *s.*?—Yes, from 50 *s.* to 3 *l.*

2011. Is there any instance in Earl Shilton of a man working on his own frame?—Such instances are very rare; he would not get employment at the present time.

2012. Suppose Lady Noel Byron, or any other charitable person were to present a man with a frame, you think it would be of no use to him?—I think he would have to pay rent for the use of his own machine if he got employment, at the present time.

2013. Mr. *Ingham.*] When you were digging for Lady Byron, what wages did you get?—She allowed 13 *s.* a week, but we took the work by the job, and got something more.

2014. What would the farmer's rate of wages be for country work?—A large farmer living at Elsthorpe, in an adjoining parish to ours, is giving his men at the present time 10 *s.* a week; one of the labourers told me so.

2015. May it be said that 10 *s.* is the ordinary wages of the country?—They vary 1 *s.* or perhaps 2 *s.* a week with different masters; they do not all pay exactly alike; some pay 10 *s.*, some 11 *s.*, and some 12 *s.*; we have one or two who are favourable to the spread of temperance, and for the encouragement of their men they give them 1 *s.* a week to go without drink if they choose to do so.

2016. Have you ordinarily cottages found for those who are engaged in country work, or do you hire cottages; is it generally part of the contract with the farmer they serve, that they shall have dwellings found for them?—No, they have to hire them.

2017. What is the average rent; is it about 3 *l.* a year?—Yes, more than that, I think.

2018. From 3 *l.* to 5 *l.*?—Yes, I should say it would average about that.

2019. *Chairman.*] When work is slack, would not a framework-knitter be compelled to take work at the lowest possible price, for fear of not being employed when trade became more brisk?—I am not aware that even in slack times the manufacturers offer lower terms than they do at other times, generally speaking.

2020. Is there not frequently a stint of work in slack time?—Yes, there is, and they do occasionally try to get extra work put in without giving anything for it.

2021. But does not stinting the work amount to offering lower terms, as far as regards the weekly earnings?—Yes, it does.

2022. And are not the workmen obliged to submit to any stint of work in slack times for fear of losing employment when trade becomes more brisk?—Decidedly; and they are subject to a great deal of annoyance in other ways; in slack times those who work for Hinckley hosiers have to go over to Hinckley, perhaps, two or three times a week, and sometimes oftener than that, for the purpose of getting the material; they give the material out so sparingly that they are compelled to go very often for it, and that causes a great loss of time.

2023. Sir *H. Halford.*] Why do they give it out in that manner?—It appears to be for the purpose of wasting the time of the operatives, they not wishing to give them full employment; it seems to be done with no other view, that I can conceive.

2024. Do you mean that an employer will give out a very small quantity of material on the Monday, for instance?—Perhaps he will give out nothing on the Monday.

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2025. But if he does give out anything it will be only a small quantity, and he will require the workman to come again during the week for more?—Yes, the workman might go on the Monday for work, and be disappointed and get nothing; he might then go on the Tuesday and get a little, but not sufficient for the week, and then he might have to go again on the Wednesday or Thursday. It is managed somehow in that way. I was going to Hinckley the week before last, and met many hands coming with their work on the Tuesday morning. That is never the case in a brisk time. They generally get their work out then on the Saturday when they take work in.

2026. I suppose it is only in consequence of the importunity of the workmen that in a slack time they get any work at all?—No, it is not altogether in consequence of the importunity of the workmen; I think it is given more for the sake of securing the rents. A large manufacturer in Hinckley told a dissenting minister very recently that if it was not for the frame rents he should not give out any employment at the present time.

2027. Mr. *Ingham.*] Would you have preferred that he should have given out work, and taken his frame rent, or that he should have given out nothing at all, which would be the other alternative?—I think it would no doubt have been better for him to have ceased altogether until there had been a demand for the goods, than that he should have vexed and put the hands about by giving them only a very little work, and by dragging them over to Hinckley two or three times in the course of the week. I think that in the end that would have been more honourable in the employer, and more beneficial to the workman.

2028. Do you think that the workman would have been satisfied with that?—I do not know; but my opinion is, that it would have been better if they had acted so.

2029. If a workman went to his master for work on a Monday, and the master said, "If you will come again on Wednesday, I will give you some work," would not the workman be better pleased than if his master said, "I will give you no work at all until trade is better"?—I believe he would.

2030. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there many persons at Earl Shilton who are upon the poor-rates?—A few. Some few whose names I have taken down are in receipt of parochial aid, because they cannot earn sufficient to support themselves.

2031. Do they get relieved from the poor-rates if they have any work at all?—Yes; where they cannot earn sufficient, they receive parish relief.

2032. They work at frames, and at the same time receive parish relief?—Yes.

2033. That is the case in a few instances that you know of?—Yes.

2034. *Chairman.*] We have been given to understand that the gentlemen who have employed you have not taken full frame rent when you have been only partially employed; Mr. Everard and Mr. Wileman?—No; I did not say so much as that, I think. I spoke of one case, but the master did not know of that. If the warehouseman had acted in accordance with the instructions given by the master, the cotton would have been given out on the Monday morning, but they did not think fit to give it before the Wednesday; the woman in that case had only half a week's work, but the master took the full rent.

2035. Is the Committee to understand that you have had to pay full frame rent, whether you have been wholly or only partially employed?—Not myself; you are referring now to my wife's case.

2036. Is it the case with the majority of hosiers in Earl Shilton that they do exact the full frame rent, whether the workmen are wholly or or only partially employed?—I believe it is the rule to do so; I know it is the rule among the smaller employers, and I believe it is the rule with the two principal ones.

2037. Does that create great dissatisfaction among the workpeople?—It does.

2038. Mr. *Mundy.*] What number of frames are employed in Earl Shilton?—Something like 600, I should say.

2039. And how many are employed by the tailors, shoemakers, and other persons you have mentioned?—I do not know that I could form an adequate idea. Some of them employ ten or a dozen, some 30 or 40, and some not so many. They vary as to the number they hold.

2040. What sort of proportion do they bear to the large manufacturers, do you think?—Mr. Homer, the principal one, employs, perhaps, 300 frames. Mr. Everard does not employ more than 150 at the present time, I should say; he has laid many down lately.

2041. That makes 450?—Yes. Many of the hands in Earl Shilton work to the Hinckley employers; they do not all work to Earl Shilton employers.

2042. Would

2042. Would the small frame owners you speak of keep their frames on, do you think, if it was not for the frame rent?—No; I think that is the only inducement they have for keeping them; or that, combined with the truck system.

2043. They would give up the thing altogether if there was no frame rent?—Yes; I think they would be compelled to retire; their source of profit would be taken away.

2044. Then that number of frames would be thrown out of employment?—I do not know that; perhaps they would find their way into the hands of more respectable employers in the course of time.

2045. Lord *J. Manners.*] Supposing those smaller holders of frames had given them up, would that diminish the employment of the workmen?—Perhaps it might for a short time, until the frames were employed or taken to by some other manufacturer.

2046. Do you think that the people who ask for this proposed Act of Parliament are aware of that probability?—I do not know whether such a thing has ever entered their heads. I am not aware that they anticipate any loss by such a change.

2047. Mr. *Cobbett.*] I understood you to say just now, that in the parish you have been speaking of people who are in work are relieved by the parish?—There are a few cases that I have met with in which parties are receiving a small amount of parish relief, and are working at the same time; one woman earns 3*s.* 6*d.* a week; she has only one dozen half-hose to make in the week; that is 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen, out of which she has to pay a shilling rent, and seaming, and those things; she cannot live on those small earnings, and she is compelled to apply for relief, and she gets, I think, 6*d.* and a loaf from the parish.

2048. Do you know whether persons who apply, and who have some work and earn some money, are, as a general rule, relieved by the parish or not?—No, I think it is not a general rule.

2049. Supposing their earnings to be so small that they can scarcely live upon them, are they allowed parish relief, or is it objected that they are earning something, and that, therefore, they must have no relief unless they come into the house?—It is generally objected to; but there are two cases of that kind that have come under my notice; one was the case of an aged woman who could not earn much; in fact, both of them were aged; one is a widow woman, and the other an aged person, and neither of them was a very good hand in the frame.

2050. Then, generally speaking, a person of middle age, and able-bodied, if earning any wages, however small, would on that account be refused out-door relief?—I think so.

2051. And would be required to come into the house on asking for relief?—Yes, the relieving officer would require that, I believe.

2052. Has that any effect, do you believe, in inducing such persons not to apply for relief?—Yes, I should say decidely so; they would not apply for relief, knowing that the house would be offered to them.

2053. Knowing that the house would be offered to them, they would rather submit to smaller receipts?—They would rather choose to remain as they were than go into the house; they have a strong aversion to the house, generally speaking, so that if their earnings are small, as the officer generally offers the house to them when they apply for relief, of course they keep away from him.

2054. Suppose they were to go into the house, they would be obliged to give up their own cottages, would they not?—They would, if the landlord required it.

2055. That is an additional reason, is it not, why they object to it?—Very likely.

2056. Does that, do you think, operate upon them in causing them to live upon less out of the house than they would have if they were in the house?—I should say it does.

2057. We have heard from witnesses who have been examined here, that they would rather live upon half rations, as it was called, out of the house, than go into the house and have full rations?—Yes.

2058. Is that induced, do you think, by the necessity for parting with their cottages, or whatever they may have, if they go into the house?—I believe it is.

2059. Do you know whether, on applying for parish relief, the persons who do so are in the habit of taking a certificate from the master as to their earnings?—I am not aware that the relieving officer requires that at their hands; he may do so, but if he does I have no knowledge of it.

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2060. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are they not obliged to sell their goods before they are taken into the house?—No; we have cases in which parties lock up their houses and go into the union-house, but they do it very reluctantly.

2061. But do they receive their goods when they come out of the union-house again?—Yes, they keep possession of their house. I am not aware of any case in which they have lost possession of their house by going into the union, or their goods either. A few cases have recently occurred in which they have gone in and stayed two or three weeks, and come out again and gone to their former residence, so that they have neither lost their goods nor their house. I think it is not unusual for them, where families go into the house and remain there for two or three weeks, to make them an offer to start, and give them something when they do go out.

Martis, 15° die Maii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Sir Joshua Walmsley.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Wickham.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Mundy.

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. *Robert Walker*, called in; and Examined.

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2062. WILL you inform the Committee whether you are engaged in the hosiery manufacture?—I am.

2063. How long have you been in the trade?—Upwards of 20 years.

2064. What number of frames do you employ?—I employ about 130 of my own frames, and occasionally perhaps as many as 100 independent frames; those are not regularly, but only occasionally employed.

2065. They are only employed when trade is good, I suppose?—Yes, when trade is good, or when circumstances require it.

2066. Do you work upon the rent system or upon the net system?—Upon the rent system entirely.

2067. Chiefly in narrow frames?—Chiefly.

2068. Are materials given out from your warehouse to middlemen for the execution of the work?—We do not employ many middlemen with a large number of frames; perhaps half a dozen frames in a shop, and the largest number that I have in one shop is about 20.

2069. Is your work carried on by means of middlemen?—No, not all; we have some hands that work direct to the warehouse.

2070. Are there not shop charges as well as frame rents that the operatives have to pay?—Yes.

2071. Can you state what those charges are?—I have asked some of our men, and they say 3*d.* per frame is the amount that they charge.

2072. You do not mean to say that that is the rent?—That is for the bringing in; there may be winding and seaming besides; the winding perhaps is about 6*d.* per frame.

2073. And is there any payment for standing?—There is a payment for standing; the 3*d.* includes the payment for standing in the case of the narrow frames.

2074. What is the usual amount of shop charges besides the frame rent?—I can state what the charges are for a few frames used for making fancy socks. On a frame paying 1*s.* 6*d.* for rent to the warehouse, the undertaker's rent and charges amount to 3*s.* 6*d.*; this rent-charge includes standing, winding, soap, oil, and other things.

2075. Does it include the rent of the frame?—It includes the rent of the frame;

frame; the rent of the frame paid to the warehouse would be 1*s.* 6*d.*, the undertaker's rent and charges being 3*s.* 6*d.*

2076. In addition to the 1*s.* 6*d.*?—No, the 3*s.* 6*d.* includes the whole; on a frame paying 3*s.* 6*d.* to the warehouse, the undertaker's rent and charges is 5*s.* 6*d.*; a frame paying 4*s.* to the warehouse pays 6*s.* to the undertaker, and the winding costs the undertaker in these cases from 9*d.* to 1*s.* on three-and-six-penny frames; and from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* on the frames charged by the undertaker 5*s.* and 6*s.*

2077. Has the operative any voice in accepting those terms?—Certainly; I should say he is as free to make the best bargain he can with the undertaker, as the undertaker is free to make the best bargain he can with the workman.

2078. Suppose the workman does not agree to the terms that are offered to him, would he not be thrown out of employment?—Possibly he might not get employment from that undertaker, but he could obtain employment from some other, particularly when trade was good; he would have no difficulty whatever in getting employment; it is a very common thing for a workman, if the terms which are offered to him by one middleman are not exactly to his mind, to go elsewhere and take a frame from some one else with whom he can make a better bargain.

2079. Are you in the habit of regularly employing them whether trade is good or slack?—To a very great extent; just now trade is exceedingly flat, and I have turned off a few hands, but the great majority of my hands are in full work as usual.

2080. Do you ever give them short work in the week?—It is very rarely that I do so; exceedingly rare.

2081. Are the charges that you speak of paid by the workmen, whether you give them short work or full work?—As far as regards myself, I never charge full rent if I do not give out full work; I always charge rent in proportion to the amount of work I give out.

2082. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You say you never charge full rent when there is not full employment given out for the week?—Never, on any occasion.

2083. Do you mean to say that if you let a frame to a man at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, and if you only give out work for four days, you do not charge the full rent for the whole week?—I do not.

2084. What deduction do you make in such a case as that?—I should charge, probably, in that case, about 1*s.*

2085. Are you prepared to lay before the Committee any statement of cases in which you have paid back to your workmen a portion of the rent when they have had less work than would keep them fully employed?—I have no written statement to that effect; I do not pay them back so much; if I give them only half work, which is but seldom the case, I only take half the amount of rent. I do not take the full amount of rent, and pay half of it back to them again.

2086. Can you give the Committee the names of the men who have been so paid?—Yes, I can give you an instance; John Hall, of Wigston; he has several frames of mine; he works a kind of yarn which I cannot get in Leicester; a Scotch yarn; the article is sometimes delayed a little in coming, and does not come to hand at the time I wish to give it him out; consequently he is obliged now and then to be a day or two days idle, and in those cases I always say to him, "How long has the hand been employed?" he will state, half a week or four days, or whatever it may be, and I then invariably charge rent in proportion to that work.

2087. Is that direct to the workman, or through a middleman?—That is through a middleman, perhaps holding half-a-dozen or eight frames.

2088. Do you know that the middleman makes the same arrangement with the workmen as that which you have made with him?—I have every reason to believe so, from the conversations I have had with the middleman; I believe that he pursues the same course of conduct towards his workmen that I have pursued towards him.

2089. But do you know it to be the fact that he does so?—I do not; I cannot speak positively to it.

2090. Is it usual for the hosiers to give back a portion of the rent of a frame when there is not full employment for it?—I should say it is almost universally the case, and that the contrary is the exception and not the rule.

2091. Then it is not, in your opinion, customary to receive full rent for half work?

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work?—I should say it is by no means customary, from conversations which I have had with a number of other manufacturers. I have heard these charges made before, and I have made it a matter of inquiry amongst my brother manufacturers. I have asked them how they act in such cases, and they have told me, "We invariably charge rent according to the work we give out; if we have not full work we allow a deduction from the rent."

2092. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to say that you employ a number of independent frames, in addition to those which belong to yourself?—Yes.

2093. Are you aware of the statements that have been made to the Committee, and the calculations which have been offered to show that frames are a kind of property returning exorbitant profits?—Yes; I am aware that such has been said to be the case.

2094. Is that your own feeling as a man of business?—I consider that it is anything but a correct statement. I think that frames do not yield a larger profit than any other trade does.

2095. In fact, you would not work independent frames if that were not your opinion?—Most assuredly not. If frames yielded such large profits as they have been supposed to yield, I would, instead of employing these independent frames, purchase more frames of my own.

2096. That would be clearly your interest as a man of business?—Yes; and I would beg to remark, that if the profits upon frames are so exorbitant as has been supposed, and if there are also profits to be derived from the sale of our goods, the profits upon the frames and upon the sale of our goods together must be very large; then does it not stand to reason that, if such be the case, there would immediately be an influx of new manufacturers and new capital to compete for these very large profits, the effect of which would of course be to bring these large profits down to the level of all other trades? As a man of business, I think that is a very satisfactory way of putting the case. The fact of a large number of failures having taken place in our trade within the last 10 years, affords, I think, very sufficient evidence that the profits that have been realised from frames have been by no means so exorbitant as has been supposed to have been the case.

2097. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] To what statements do you refer as having been statements made before this Committee?—I refer to statements which have been made generally as to very large profits being made from frame rents; statements that we employ our machinery for the sake of the high profits that are got upon that machinery alone, and that the profits upon the goods are a secondary consideration in comparison.

2098. But you have referred to particular statements of rents leading to very high profits that have been laid before this Committee?—I think if you refer to Mr. Biggs' evidence on the first day, you will find that the gist of his evidence is to that effect; I happened to be present the first day on which Mr. Biggs was examined, and certainly his evidence went to show that the profits upon frames were very high and very exorbitant.

2099. Will you have the goodness to take the evidence given by Mr. Biggs into your hands, and point out in what respect it is in your judgment erroneous?—There is one statement particularly in the evidence of Mr. Biggs, that I would wish particularly to enter into; he puts a case of the investment of a certain amount of money in the purchase of five frames, and also the money expended upon them, and he states that an expenditure of 25 *l.* in the first place realises at the end of the period to which he alludes a profit of 192 *l.* 10 *s.*; he put in a paper to that effect; and then Mr. Collins, when he was examined, is asked to look at that paper, and to say whether he considers it correct. Mr. Collins replies, that he thinks the cost of the frames is rather underdone than overdone; a statement which to any person well acquainted with the cost of such a frame is marvellous. I must say, the whole statement, or at all events a considerable portion of it, I consider to be founded in error. In the first place, these five frames are assumed to cost 5 *l.* each; that supposes they are frames with new insides, because he goes on to say they always require three or four moulds; now, a new inside will stand four moulds, and it must be a new inside to stand four moulds; a frame with a new inside will cost from 7 *l.* to 7 *l.* 10 *s.*, and they are not to be got in the regular way under those prices.

2100. Mr. *Gardner.*] You would admit, I suppose, that every now and then a frame may be bought cheaper than that?—Yes, if a person under certain circumstances is obliged to sell a frame, that alters the case entirely; but a new frame with a new inside, purchased from a frame owner, will cost from 7 *l.* to 7 *l.* 10 *s.*

2101. Sir

2101. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] That would be an error to the extent of 10 *l.*?—It would be an error to the amount of 2 *l.* or 2 *l.* 10 *s.* on each frame; the moulding, as stated here, will be somewhere about correct; now if from an expenditure such as has been represented here so large a profit as 192 *l.* 10 *s.* can be got in 20 years, that is certainly what may be called an exorbitant profit.

2102. Mr. *Gardner.*] The long and short of it is, that in your opinion the profits on frames are not exorbitant, otherwise you would have no independent frames working to you?—Unquestionably.

2103. You would buy them yourself, and not allow anybody else to get that profit from them which you yourself could make?—Certainly that would be the case.

2104. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have told the Committee, that the statement to which you have referred as having been made by two gentlemen who are manufacturers, is incorrect; will you have the goodness to point out to the Committee in what respect it is incorrect. You have shown that in one instance there may be an error in the first cost of the frames to the extent of 10 *l.*, but you have not pointed out any other error in the calculation made by Mr. Biggs, and which Mr. Cummings stated to be accurate?—In the question put by you to Mr. Collins, you say here, "So that he gets 192 *l.* 10 *s.* at the end of the period for an expenditure of 25 *l.*;" we will divide the 192 *l.* 10 *s.* by 20 years; that will amount to upwards of 9 *l.* a year, or nearly 10 *l.*; then this 25 *l.* expended realises a profit of 10 *l.* a year, which is a tolerable good profit; you must divide the 25 *l.* apparently by 20; it is 25 *l.* expended in 20 years, bringing 9 *l.* profit each year.

2105. Will you tell us how much a shilling a week rent upon the five frames would bring in per annum?—It would bring in 2 *l.* 10 *s.* per annum; and on five frames it would bring in 12 *l.* 10 *s.*

2106. What would that bring in for the 20 years?—About 250 *l.* odd; but you will allow me to state, with reference to these cases of individual frames, that the thing is based most completely on a fallacy; the thing is fallacious; in reckoning the profit on my frames at the end of the year, I do not take one, two, or three, or four individual frames; I take the whole amount of my capital invested in frames, and see what that capital has brought in from the whole amount of my frames, not from a few individual cases, and I find by that means that the sum which I have received as a return for the capital I have invested in frames does not amount by any means to an exorbitant profit.

2107. How many years will a frame, being thoroughly in repair, last without repair?—From 3 to 3½ years is the average time a frame will go.

2108. Have you not known frames go in some cases for many years?—I have.

2109. For how many years have you known them go?—A frame may go for six, seven, eight, or nine years, but these are exceedingly exceptional cases; if a hand has scarcely any work for his frame, it will go for a long period; but I take the average, under average circumstances, and we are all agreed on that point, I think, that from 3 to 3½ years is about the time a frame will go; it will require moulding about that time.

2110. *Chairman.*] Are you speaking of narrow frames?—Yes; wide frames will not go so long.

2111. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have given us your opinion very strongly as to frames not being the valuable property they have been described to be; I understand you to say distinctly, that they are not so, taking them altogether?—They are not.

2112. In your opinion, is it the case that more goods are frequently made in a flat state of trade than the demand requires, merely for the sake of the rents?—I do not think that they are made merely for the sake of the rents; they are made partly for the sake of the rents, partly for the sake of keeping your hands together, and partly for the purpose of preventing the frames getting out of repair from disuse.

2113. By keeping your hands together, do you mean you are afraid of losing the good ones?—The probability is that we might not get hands so readily, or such good hands to occupy their places, and another thing is, that frames, by lying down, are apt to get out of order; they will get dirty, and require cleaning, and other little repairs costing money, before they can go to work again.

2114. Probably you think, also, that partial employment to these poor people is better than none at all?—Most unquestionably, and they think so themselves; they say, using a common expression, "It is better to have half a loaf than no bread;" that is a very common saying with them.

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2115. Is it usual, as far as your experience goes, to take full rent for frames in the case of illness?—As far as my own individual case is concerned, it is a thing I never do, and I have every reason to believe that it is not by any means to be charged upon the trade that such is the case; there may be instances in which it is done, but they are the exceptions and not the rule.

2116. Do you think that the present system of rent and charges gives greater facility to the middlemen, in a flat state of trade, to increase the amount of his charges, than a net or poundage system would give?—I think the present system of rent and charges has exceedingly little to do with it; if there is a superabundance of labour in the market, under any system, that labour will become less valuable; they will have to exchange that labour for a less amount of money than they would receive if the demand for their labour was greater; so that, as I said before, I think the system of rent and charges has very little, if anything, to do with the question.

2117. In any state of trade?—In any state of trade.

2118. Do you think that if frame rents were abolished by Act of Parliament it would be possible for the owners of frames to make up their loss by charging an increased per centage of profit upon the goods?—I think it would be altogether impossible to do so without an increased demand for the goods springing up simultaneously with it; if the price of labour is regulated by supply and demand, so also is the price of goods; and if the rents were taken off we could not put it upon the goods; we could not get a higher price for those goods unless at the same time, as I stated before, there was such a demand sprung up at the same time as would enable us to get more; if the demand should remain the same we could not put it upon the goods; it would have to be taken off the earnings of the workmen.

2119. No change in the method of paying wages, whether enforced by Act of Parliament, or the effect of a voluntary agreement, would, in your opinion, have the slightest effect upon your markets?—I cannot see that it could, in any way, affect the demand for our goods; the causes which affect that demand are altogether beyond that.

2120. It has been stated repeatedly that the condition of the framework-knitters has deteriorated considerably within the last few years; what is your opinion upon that subject?—There have been quite as many advances in wages as there have been reductions within the last four, or five, or six years; the condition of the workmen, I believe, has not been in the slightest degree deteriorated, as far as wages are concerned, within the last few years. Of course, when the price of corn rises and bread becomes dearer, their condition is worse than it was before; but, as I said before, I do not consider that the condition of the workmen has deteriorated at all within the last few years; I have known prices to be lower than they are now; we are now giving, at least, 3*d.* a dozen more for wrought-hose than we were giving a number of years ago. We are also giving 2*d.* or 3*d.* a dozen higher prices for the straight-down hose than we used to give. They have both been made lower than they are at the present time within my knowledge.

2121. Mr. *Wickham.*] What upon the average do the workmen earn by the week?—It depends very much upon the branch they are employed in.

2122. Can you state how much they earn a week in one or two of the ordinary branches?—I have here the statement of the net earnings of a considerable number of men in the straight-down branch; I extracted it from the book of a middleman some time ago, and if the Committee will allow me, I will read a few of them.

2123. *Chairman.*] Is that in Leicester?—Yes, this is in Leicester; in the shop of Thomas Sutton, of Denman-street, who did a good deal of work for me, and has a considerable number of frames, there is a person named Burroughs, whose net earnings are 15*s.* 1*d.*, 11*s.* 9*d.*, 12*s.* 3*d.*, 18*s.* 4*d.*, 15*s.* 8*d.*, 17*s.* 4*d.*, 17*s.* 1*d.*, 13*s.* 7*d.*, 14*s.* 11*d.*, 12*s.*, 15*s.* 4*d.*, 10*s.* 9*d.*, 17*s.* 1*d.*, and 16*s.* 6*d.*

2124. Those are the net earnings of one individual?—Those are the net earnings of one individual on straight-down hose.

2125. He has nothing to pay out of that?—No; these are clear earnings after all deductions are made; he has nothing to pay out of those earnings.

2126. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you give us the average of that?—I have not got it; but it would be about 15*s.*, I think. You will see a considerable discrepancy between the earnings in different weeks; one week they are 10*s.* 9*d.*, and another they are as high as 18*s.* 4*d.*

2127. Sir *H. Halford.*] On a wide frame?—On a wide frame; of course during those two weeks the workman is paying the same amount of rent and charges

charges whether his net earnings amount to 10*s.* 9*d.* or 18*s.* 4*d.*; if he only earns 10*s.* 9*d.* it is because he does not choose to work so many hours in one week as he does in the other.

2128. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know, of your own knowledge, that sufficient work was given out to the man in that case to employ him the whole of each week?—Yes; I asked this person particularly, "How do you act with your men when you have a flat trade, or when you have not worsted to give out; do you take full rent and charges, or not?" He said, "No, I never do; I make my rent and charges according to the work I give out; if I have not full work to give out, I do not charge full rent and charges." I have a list containing the names of all the parties working; there are a considerable number of them. I have stated the net earnings of each workman, and in another column the rent and charges that are taken from each frame; I have also stated the kind of work the hand was employed in making; some make the legs of the hose and some make the feet, and so on; all the particulars are stated in this paper.

2129. Do I understand you distinctly to say, sufficient worsted was given out in these cases to occupy the frames the whole week?—Yes.

2130. Then the discrepancy in the amount of wages earned in different weeks arose from the comparative industry or illness of the workmen?—Just so. [*The Witness delivered in a Paper.*] *Vide* Appendix.

2131. Have you any other paper that you wish to lay before the Committee?—Yes; I have also statements as to two other branches; one is as to children's socks, and the other as to wrought hose; the children's socks are from a shop in Archdeacon-lane, of the name of Embrough. I have put down here the weekly average earnings of different individuals; and if the Committee will allow me, I will put it in. [*The Witness handed in the same.*] *Vide* Appendix.

2132. To what period of the year does this paper apply?—The beginning of March.

2133. In the present year?—No, this year is an exceptional year; trade has been very bad, and is bad now.

2134. Was trade brisk at the time to which that statement refers?—There was a fair demand for labour at that time, and the hands were generally in full employ. There is also a statement with reference to the wrought-hose branch in the paper I have just put in; that is one of the worst paid branches of the whole trade. William Wheatley earned 9*s.* 2*d.*; this is when the rent is deducted; probably there might be from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* for winding and seaming besides, which would reduce the average earnings of this man to somewhere about 8*s.*, which is, in comparison with other branches, a small amount of wages. There are a number of cases in which the earnings, after all deductions are made, will be about 8*s.*; there is one man whose earnings would rise as high as from 10*s.* 6*d.* to 11*s.*; another whose wages would rise as high as 13*s.* after all deductions were made; there is another who falls very low; it is the wife of one of the men; her earnings here amount to 5*s.* 4*d.*, and her husband's to 11*s.* 5*d.*; the husband's net earnings would amount probably in this case to about 10*s.*, and the wife to about 4*s.* 6*d.*; but the probability is the wife was engaged in household affairs, which prevented her from earning as much as she otherwise would have earned.

2135. Are those fair specimens of the worst paid branch of the trade?—Yes.

2136. Mr. *Wickham.*] How many hours would that person work to make that amount of wages?—It is a difficult question to answer, but I should say probably from eight to 10 hours; probably 10 hours a day.

2137. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you consider to be a fair average day's work?—I should say 10 or 11 hours.

2138. In factories, what are the hours?—Ten hours, I believe; 12 hours, with two hours for meals, is the usual time.

2139. Practically, do you think the knitters do work as much as 10 hours a day per week?—I should think upon the whole they do not; it is a very common thing with the framework-knitters to make what they call Saint Monday, when they do exceedingly little work, and Saturday is just as bad; they do very little work indeed on those days.

2140. How many hours do you think, at a rough guess, they practically do work per day, taking the whole week and the whole population?—Perhaps four days at 10 or 12 hours a day, which would reduce each day's work in the week reckoning the six days, to about eight hours.

2141. How many hours in the week do you think a knitter actually works?—I should

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I should say about 48 hours in the whole week, probably; they are exceedingly irregular in their habits with regard to work.

2142. Mr. *Wickham.*] You do not employ any of these people directly yourself, do you?—Yes, I do employ a few directly.

2143. Can you give the Committee any information with regard to those you employ directly yourself, as to the hours of work, and the wages they earn?—It is difficult for me to say how many hours they work, they are not under my control; they are placed in villages some distance off, and I have no means of ascertaining; they are exceedingly irregular in their habits; one week they may work very closely, as they often do the week previous to a holiday, and in the holiday weeks they will do perhaps no work at all.

2144. Mr. *Gardner.*] You know that it is a common practice with them to take a holiday every week?—Saint Monday is a holiday which is very generally observed, I believe, among that class of persons.

2145. And any other day?—On Saturdays they do very little work; on those two days they do exceedingly little work.

2146. How is it on Tuesday?—They rarely go to work in the morning; perhaps they will go to work in the forenoon; part of the day is spent before they will settle down to work.

2147. Do I understand you to say that they work very little, or not at all, on the Saturday and Monday, and not a great deal on the Tuesday?—That is very commonly the case.

2148. It has been stated that while wages have been gradually reduced within the last few years, rents have been increased; have you any observations to make with reference to that statement?—Rents, I believe, at one time were lower than they are now; it is true that frames for which we now charge 1 *s.* were at one time charged only 9 *d.*, but I think I can account for that in some degree; frames were taken more care of in those days than they are now, and there was a better material worked in those frames; generally what we call the hand-combed worsted, which was a softer article, and not so likely to wear a frame; a man does not take so much care of his frame now as he used to do, and the yarn he works wears the frame more, so that the frames do not pay a larger per centage profit with the 1 *s.* now charged, than they paid at that time when the charge was only 9 *d.*

2149. Why does not a workman take as much care of his frame as he did formerly?—Possibly it may be because his condition is not so good as it was at one time; it is difficult to say why; however, frames are worn down quicker than they used to be; the price of the work is lower; they are obliged to make more goods upon it to obtain a living than they did in those days. I believe that at one time the price of labour was double what it is at the present moment, in the wrought hose branch, so that a hand did not require to do so much work for a living as it is necessary for him to do now.

2150. How do you account for this depreciation in the condition of the wrought-hose knitter?—I believe that one great cause is the difference in the mode of dress; a number of years ago knee breeches used to be worn very much, and then no one would put on a pair of stockings unless they were really a good pair, costing a good deal in the making and in the material. Another cause is the introduction of the straight-down hose; I think that that perhaps has more to do with it than anything else. The straight-down hose are very much cheaper than the wrought hose, and have come very much more into demand among the working classes, and the price of labour in the wrought hose branch has suffered in consequence.

2151. Mr. *Biggs.*] You are alluding now to the introduction of wider machinery making more than one stocking at once?—Yes, five or six.

2152. Mr. *Gardner.*] You mean that a greater number of inferior stockings are now produced in proportion to the whole supply than there used to be?—Very much more; at one period there was no such thing as a straight-down stocking in the trade.

2153. Describe, if you please, what a straight-down stocking is?—It is a stocking all of one width from the top of the stocking to the heel; the wrought stocking is a stocking properly fashioned or narrowed when you get down to the calf, and that can only be made, or is seldom made, except in the narrow frames; the straight-down hose can be made as many as five or six at a time in wide machinery, and can be produced more cheaply and more rapidly.

2154. Mr. *Mundy.*] And of an inferior quality?—The material is not inferior.

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The material is generally fair, but, owing to the much lower price of labour, and to the circumstance that they can be produced in so much larger quantities, they can be brought into the market at a very much lower price than the wrought hose, and consequently the wrought hose have had, in some degree, to compete with this inferior class of goods.

2155. What do you say as to the durability of the article?—There is no great difference in that.

2156. Mr. *Biggs.*] The difference is in the fashion?—Yes.

2157. Mr. *Gardner.*] In fact, when people wore knee breeches they could not wear straight-down hose?—No. Now that trowsers are worn, you cannot tell whether it is a straight-down stocking or a fashioned stocking that a man has on; it is not an article of dress that is seen, so that a person is not anxious to have an article that will make a show or appearance.

2158. *Chairman.*] I think you have said you believe that your middleman does not charge more to the workmen than you allow him?—I have every reason to believe he does not.

2159. But you have no check which will enable you to know that he does not do so?—I have no check except his own word.

2160. Generally in the trade is there not in the present mode of transacting business a great inducement to middlemen to extort from the operatives more than the manufacturers allow?—At all times middlemen are anxious, of course, to make the most they can of their services; but I think the hand himself has as much to do with it as the middleman. If there is a great demand for his labour he will not submit to unusual charges or exactions.

2161. Is it not the case, that during the greater part of the year the trade is not good, and that it is only during the smaller part of the year that the hands are in full employment?—No; I think it is very common to shift from one branch of the trade to another; from worsted to cotton; so that by that means, if trade is fair, we can generally employ our hands upon the whole pretty regularly; there are times, such as the present, when it is difficult to do so.

2162. You have said that the workmen are very apt to make Monday a saint's day, and that they will not work on a Saturday, and sometimes even part of Tuesday?—That is very common.

2163. Has that not arisen a good deal from the manufacturers having been in the habit of not giving them out sufficient work, or delaying to give it out until the Tuesday or Wednesday in the week?—I should say not; because it is a very usual thing, when a workman brings in his work, that he has a considerable amount of material left in his hands, so that he has plenty of material to commence the week with; and with the wrought hose branch that is almost universally the case; it is very rare indeed that they bring in their materials so close, that they cannot go to work on Monday morning if they choose to do so.

2164. Is that the case where stinted work is given out?—If half-work is given out that is not of course the case, because they work up the material as close as they can.

2165. Then at those times, it is not the fault of the workman that he does not work on the Monday, but he does not work because he has not work to do?—Of course, if he has not work to do he cannot go to work.

2166. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is there any other cause that you can assign for a deterioration in the condition of the frame-work knitters besides the change of fashion?—There has been from one cause and another a superabundance of labour in the market occasionally, which has been the means of deteriorating their condition.

2167. Has foreign competition, do you think, had anything to do with it?—It has something to do with it, if not directly, yet indirectly; for instance, we have not much competition directly from Germany, but indirectly, we have some competition in this way: if the price of labour in Leicester were to rise from some cause or other, it would have the effect of withdrawing from Nottingham a number of workmen, in order that they might obtain higher wages; the consequence of that would be, that in Nottingham the value of labour would rise, and as they are in direct competition with Germany, the class of goods made by Germans would then come into competition with the Nottingham manufactures, and probably would be enabled to undersell them; so that indirectly, if not directly, we have a foreign competition.

2168. There appears to be a great variation in the amount of work done by different hands; do you think it fair in those cases to charge a uniform rent?—I do,

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do, for this reason: it would be difficult to adopt any other system than the present one; there is such a variety in the speed of different hands, and such a variety in the quantity of work that they will make, that for us to adopt a system that would pay them according to the work done, or according to a net system, would be exceedingly troublesome; one hand will do three dozen of hose, another two, and another will do one; now, if we do not adopt a uniform system of rent, we must reduce the price to correspond with the rent we have charged; if a hand does three dozens of hose, for which we now pay 4*s.* a dozen, we should, under the net system, pay him 3*s.* 8*d.*; that would be a reduction of 4*d.* a dozen, which would be equal to the rent. If another hand does two dozens, we should have to pay him 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen; another hand might do only one dozen, and the price to him would be reduced to 3*s.* Now, it would be quite impossible to conduct business on any such system as that; we could not do it. Mr. Biggs showed, very conclusively I think, on the first day of his examination, that the net system could not be adopted. Another reason is, that if I have a workman who produces 150 dozens of hose in the year, I get a profit by the sale of that 150 dozens; on the other hand, if a man only does 50 dozens, he enables me to get a profit on only 50 dozens; I am, therefore, placed at a disadvantage; my machine is comparatively of little value, as compared with one which is worked by a hand who does 150 dozens. If, then, I do not get a little more rent from that frame, I had much better place it in the hands of a person who would do 150 dozens.

2169. That is, you would take a little more rent from the idle man?—Yes; I think it is but fair that I should pay more rent in proportion, because he is idler, and does less work.

2170. Do you think that Mr. Collins, in his evidence, means something to that effect?—Yes; it is quite to the purpose: his net system, as he calls it, is really the rent system, under a different name, and with what may be called the worst features of the rent system. The question is put to him thus: "Do the industrious hands prefer the stoppage or the net system?" The answer is: "I have both good and bad in my factory; I am obliged to have both sorts. The good hands like the net system best; I make a difference between the good and bad hands in my factory; I have tried it all ways; the good hands say, 'We like the net system very well, but we find we have to draw the idle and the bad hands up the hill;' and they say, 'Master, we should like to have this altered.' I say, 'How is this to be done? make a proposition to me, and then, if I think it right, I will agree;' they did so, and said, 'We know what about the rent of the machinery ought to be; we are good, quick hands, and when we have done a certain quantity of work, we think we ought to have an extra price for our labour.' I said then, 'Well, but what am I to do with the bad hands?' They said, 'If they do not earn a certain quantity of money, they ought to be paid so much less.'" That, you see, is clearly the operation of this objectionable state of things which they speak of; the slow hand does but little work, and he is obliged to pay more, because he does but little work; the quick hand does more than an average quantity of work and is paid an extra price because he does so. Now that is just the operation of the present rent system.

2171. Does Mr. Collins go on to say he was obliged to take that course?—"We agreed upon that principle."

2172. What principle?—The principle of deducting something from the slow hand, and paying the quick hand an extra price for his work.

2173. In order to make up for the small quantity of work done by the slow hand?—Yes.

2174. Does not that operate like a stoppage?—Yes; if a man making one dozen of hose a week on a frame pays a shilling, he seems to be paying more than a hand making three dozens of hose who pays only a shilling. But here is the same principle carried out; if they do not earn a certain amount of money, they must be paid so much less.

2175. And does not Mr. Collins say his hands universally agreed to that reduction of wages, as against the idle men?—Yes; he says the hands wished this to be done.

2176. He says, "We agreed upon that principle, which we have acted upon, and which works extremely well; they are all satisfied with it." If stoppage were prohibited by Act of Parliament, do you consider that dismissal for imperfect work would be a sufficient check?—I do not think it would be any check at all; hands

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are so accustomed to shift about that it would be really no check; I have frequently heard complaints from middlemen, particularly when trade is good, that workmen will come in the middle of the week and take away what they call their tackle, and pay nothing; they shift about just as they please, so that to hold out the threat of dismissal to a man, under such circumstances as these, is absurd.

2177. Do you take fines now?—No, we do not take fines.

2178. Would you do so, supposing rents and charges were abolished by Act of Parliament?—Fines would be something similar to stoppages, so that I do not think that, if rents and charges were abolished, we could take fines any more than other stoppages; it would be a stoppage, in fact.

2179. It has been stated that it is the interest of manufacturers to employ slow hands to produce a smaller quantity of work, rather than quick hands who would produce more, because the employer obtained rent by that means from a larger number of frames; have you any observations to make upon that statement?—I cannot see how it can be to the interest of a manufacturer, who has anything like a fair trade, to employ slow hands; I think it is to his interest to make the most he can of his machinery by employing the good and quick hands, who will produce the most work upon his machine; if a man does 150 dozens of hose per annum, I get a profit on that 150; if he does only 50 dozens, I get the profit only on those 50 dozens; it clearly, therefore, cannot be to the interest of a person who has anything of a fair trade to have slow hands.

2180. Do you not think that the present system gives to the unscrupulous manufacturer an unfair advantage over a more conscientious or liberal one?—In all trades, the unscrupulous men will apparently have an advantage over the more conscientious; but I question whether, in the long run, that will be the case; I think an honest, upright, and well-intentioned employer, whether he is a manufacturer or a middleman, will get best served, and in the long run will be a gainer.

2181. I suppose in the hosiery, as in all other trades, those employers who have the best reputation for giving good wages, and for behaving well to their workmen, get the best served?—Yes.

2182. The hosiery trade does not form an exception to that rule?—No.

2183. Do you know of any cases in which workmen, who have been put upon the net system, have requested to go back to the system of rent and charges?—I have heard of two cases of that kind; there is the case of Mr. Collins, who in his evidence has stated that he has shifted about two or three times; there is also the case of a Mr. Knapp, who works to Messrs. Biggs. Messrs. Biggs carry out what is called the poundage system with Mr. Knapp, but he cannot carry it out with his workmen, because they will not submit to it; he proposed, when the system of poundage was adopted by Messrs. Biggs, that his workmen should follow it out; but the great majority of them wished to continue upon the old system. He said, "I asked them why?" and they told me because upon the poundage system they would have to pay more than upon the rent system; that the advantage would only be to the slow and idle hands; that they would have to pay poundage according to the work they did; that if they did no work, there would be no poundage, and if they did but little work there would be but little poundage; so that the advantage would be to the idle and slow hand, and to the disadvantage of the industrious and quick hand. In the case of Mr. Knapp, Messrs. Biggs are at the present moment carrying out the poundage system with him, while he, at the same time, is carrying out the rent and charges system with his workmen.

2184. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is that so?—It is so; I saw Mr. Knapp, in order that I might collect about this matter; I saw him last year, when he told me the fact, and I again waited upon him yesterday morning, in order that I might assure myself of it, and I put the question to him again, and it is as I have just stated.

2185. Mr. *Gardner.*] Mr. John Biggs and some other gentlemen have told the Committee that the adoption of the poundage system is beneficial, both to the manufacturer and to the workman, and in fact that it is beneficial to every class of persons connected with the manufacture of hosiery?—Yes, I recollect Mr. Biggs stating that in his evidence; I would just remark with reference to that, that Mr. Biggs has also stated that nothing but an Act of Parliament would compel the adoption of the poundage system, because of the great profits arising from the rent and charges system, as compared with the poundage system.

2186. Do you mean there is an inconsistency in that?—It appears to me to be

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be contradictory altogether. He is asked this, "I have asked you questions hitherto with regard to the workmen; do you believe that it would be for the benefit of the trade generally and of the manufacturers, that such a system should be adopted?" He says, "I do." Then he is asked, "You think they would all benefit by it?" He says, "Unquestionably; every class of society connected with the manufacture would benefit by it." Then he is asked, "Having considered the whole subject, having been so long connected with the trade, and having a thorough knowledge of it in all its bearings, do you see any objection to legislation on the subject?" And he answers, "I think that the change cannot be effected without legislation, because the difference in the amount of profit in the one case as against that in the other, is too great to induce a general acquiescence." That appears to me to be a direct contradiction of the answer given before, in which he says it would be beneficial to all classes; and when he says it would be beneficial, I suppose he means beneficial in a pecuniary point of view; it appears to me to be a decided contradiction; if nothing but an Act of Parliament would compel it, it is clear that the system is not now adopted, because they do not see that it would be beneficial to their interests to do so.

2187. You think the abolition of the rent and charges system by Act of Parliament would be exceedingly injurious to the trade?—I think that if the rent system were done away with, when the flat trade occurred, the probability is that they would not be so likely to give out employment so freely; if there is any profit at all to be derived from frames, and I maintain that there is some, though not a very large profit, it is to the interest of the manufacturer, if he can, to employ those frames, but if rent is to be abolished, then one inducement at all events to employ frames is taken away.

2188. It has been said by Mr. Biggs and some other gentlemen, that rather than have the miserable employment that they have at present, it would be better that they should go on the parish altogether; what is your opinion on that subject?—I think the workmen themselves would not agree to such a statement; I know a number of them, and I think it is very much to their credit that they struggle with might and main to preserve their independence, and to keep themselves from falling upon the parish; I think that is very much to their credit; they have a great dread of going upon the parish, and would be thankful for half work rather than have none at all.

2189. Are you of opinion that the abolition of the rent system would be likely to throw large numbers of people wholly out of employment?—I think it exceedingly likely that it would have that effect. One inducement to employ frames, no doubt, is the rent to be obtained for their use; and that inducement being taken away, the probability is that it would lead in some degree to less work being given out.

2190. We have heard a great deal of the practice of stinting; what effect has that practice, do you think, upon the condition of the workmen; have you any remarks to offer to the Committee upon that subject?—The practice of stinting, I think, is very little carried out by the manufacturers.

2191. In bad times?—If I understand what is meant by it, it is spreading the work over more frames than the work will fully employ; I do not think that that practice is fairly chargeable to the manufacturers, at all events; I have heard it said that it is done by middlemen, but it appears to me to be just another form of reducing wages; there is more labour in the market than there is demand for, and consequently they are obliged to take less for that labour than they otherwise would take; in fact, they are obliged as it were to submit to full charges without having full work, which is, I conceive, only another form of reducing wages.

2192. And, supposing the state of the trade to be the same, whatever the mode of payment should be, the reduction would be just as great under any system?—Quite so; there is no question, in my own mind, that, under any system, it would be within the power of a middleman to make deductions on a workman's earnings, whether under the rent system, the net system, or the poundage system.

2193. Mr. *Biggs.*] You mean, in times of depression?—Yes; if there is more labour in the market than there is a demand for, the workman, under any system, would have to take less for his labour than he would obtain under other circumstances.

2194. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you of opinion that no alteration, by Act of Parliament, in the mode in which wages are paid in Leicester, would have any beneficial

ficial effect upon the condition of the workmen?—I do not see how it could have any beneficial effect whatever upon the condition of the workmen; I consider that the condition of the workmen depends altogether upon the relation of supply to demand; and whether you pass Acts of Parliament or not, nothing but an increased demand for their labour will better the condition of the framework-knitters.

2195. Do you think that any legislative interference would tend to do mischief?—Yes; I deprecate very much the present attempt to legislate upon the subject, because I think it will be a means of increasing any bad feeling which may have already existed. It would have a tendency, at all events, to increase rather than to allay it, by leading the men to suppose it is in the power of the Legislature to do something to elevate and raise their condition, while it is clearly contrary to all principles of political economy to suppose it can be so.

2196. Are you of opinion, that, whether owing to the introduction of improved machinery or other causes, the system of the rent and charges is likely to be gradually diminished?—In some branches of the trade I think it exceedingly likely; just now there is a great change going on with regard to the straight-down hose branch; the introduction of the circular frame has almost thrown out of work the straight-down hose branch altogether; the net system is carried out there, because in fact no other system could well be acted upon; the machines are generally propelled by steam power, and the persons attending the working of those machines are generally paid so much per week for their time and labour.

2197. Upon the net system?—Yes; in fact, no other system could be carried out. Some persons also are of opinion that in the course of time such changes will be made in the wide frames, as will enable them to make wrought hose much cheaper and as well finished as they can now be made upon the narrow frame; and if they can do so, of course that will throw a great number of narrow wrought hose frames out of employment. There are various opinions upon that subject. I am rather more inclined to think with Mr. Mitchell, that the narrow wrought hose frames will still continue to be employed; they will make a better class of goods, and it will be difficult, I think, to make them cheaper; the kind of improvements that must be applied to the wide frames, I think, would be so expensive, that I doubt whether it will be a successful experiment. However, it is an experiment which is now making; there is a gentleman now in the room who will have something, perhaps, to say upon that question, and in the course of time it will be shown whether the experiment is successful or not.

2198. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The difficulty lies in the fashioning?—Yes, in making it up what we call a full fashioned stocking; a wrought hose with narrowed gussets and narrowed toes; it appears to me that the machinery must be very complicated and very expensive, and that that will prevent, in some degree, the introduction of such machinery, and even if introduced, I think that the present wrought hose frames will successfully compete with it.

2199. But in all those cases in which fashion is not required, steam power can be made available?—Yes, and there is no question that it will be the means of throwing a considerable number of operatives out of employment; it has done so already.

2200. *Chairman.*] I think you say that the rents which you receive do not give you more than a fair interest for the capital you have invested in frames?—When I speak of the investment of my capital, I speak with reference to the whole of my business. If I invest a certain amount of capital, I look for a fair return from the profits upon my machines, and from the sale of my goods; and the two sources of profit, put together, I do not consider are more than a fair return for the capital I have invested in the trade.

2201. You do not look altogether to the profits you make upon hosiery, but you look also to the profits that you make upon frame-rents?—I look principally to the profits I make on the sale of my goods, and secondarily to the profits I make upon the rents; but that is a secondary consideration altogether.

2202. Sir *H. Halford.*] So that you think the owner of the machinery is entitled to what is called a profit beyond the interest of the money, and the expenses attending the maintenance of that machinery?—I do not say he is entitled to it; I think he is entitled to get as high a profit on the capital he has invested as he can; that is, upon the investment of the whole of it, whether it is invested in machines or in goods.

2203. You think that is a fair source of profit, apart from the profit derived

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from the sale of goods?—I think it is. If I invest a portion of my capital in machines, I look for some fair profit from that investment, otherwise I would not invest it in the machines at all.

2204. Is there, in any other business but that of the hosiery manufacture, such a thing as profit derived from capital invested in machinery apart from the sale of goods?—I think most other manufactures are conducted on a somewhat different system; ours is conducted on what we call the domestic system; the frames are not under any immediate control; they are spread about in villages, and may be worked to other people in consequence of that; so that, if we had no rent to receive from those frames, they might be worked to other people to our injury. We should be, in that case, finding capital for other manufacturers without any remuneration for it; but under the present system, even if the frames are worked to another manufacturer, we still receive something for the wear and tear of that machinery while it is so employed. If the frames were entirely under our own control and in a factory, and if we could get the hands to work regular hours, and so many days in the week, we might then, probably, dispense with the rent system. We might make such a deduction from the price paid to the workmen as would be equivalent to the rent which we now receive.

2205. I think you say, you consider yourself entitled to a profit upon the whole of your capital invested in machinery, whether it is employed or not?—No; not whether it is employed or not. I do not expect to receive any rent for my machines when they are not employed.

2206. But when the state of trade is such, as not to admit of the full employment of your machines, do you proportion the rent exactly to the quantity of materials given out?—As near as I can. I ask the workmen how many days the hand has been at work; if he says three days, I then take half the rent; and if he says four days, I take a little more, as near as I can. I generally make it satisfactory both to the workman and myself.

2207. Do you think that is the practice generally?—Yes, I think that is the general practice; and I think that any departure from that practice is the exception, and not the rule.

2208. But still you think there are such exceptions?—There may be such exceptions; I have heard it said that there are such exceptions; I do not know of them myself.

2209. Would not a person acting on that system have an advantage which would enable him to undersell the fairer manufacturer?—I think that is doubtful, because, if he does not act honestly towards his workmen, the workmen will try to take advantage of him in some other way.

2210. *Chairman.*] Uunder the present law, has not the middleman the power of exacting full rent when only half work is given out?—He has the power, if the workman cannot do otherwise than accept the terms he offers. As I said before, I do not think that the present system has anything to do with it; if he is really inclined to press the workman to make his goods at a lower rate than he has been accustomed to make them at, or in other words, if he wants to make deductions from his wages when there is a superabundance of labour in the market, a workman cannot help himself; he must take less, so that the present system of rent and charges has really very little to do with it.

2211. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are acquainted with the evidence which was taken before the Commissioner, and which is contained in his report?—I have not seen it lately; I am acquainted with a portion of the book, but I have not seen it for a number of years.

2212. That report contains several instances, extracted from the evidence, of very exorbitant charges for frame-rents?—It does.

2213. Do you think there is any ground for questioning the accuracy of such instances?—I think there is great reason to question the accuracy of those instances. I think that, if the circumstances under which they took place were fully explained, it would alter the whole complexion and character of the case; it is stated that perhaps, out of a gross earning of 28*s.*, deductions to the amount of 1*l.* will be taken. Now, if those cases were fairly investigated, I am persuaded that a great majority of them would be found to bear an altogether different character from that which they are supposed to bear. If a workman, at the commencement of a week, enters on a frame, he enters upon it with a liability to pay the rent and charges in connexion with that frame; if he does not choose to go to work till the Friday, or towards the end of the week, he has a comparatively small amount of wages to receive, because the greater portion of what he has earned

earned has to go in payment of rent and charges. Now, this is the way, I think, in which these cases may be easily explained: that it is because the workman does not choose to work regularly and industriously the whole of the week that his rent and charges are so disproportionate to his earnings.

2214. You said, I think, that there would be a difficulty in carrying on the business, if the employer was precluded from recovering rents by stoppages, because he might be deprived of his rent by the conduct of a shuffling workman, who would leave his work and go away; was not that the tendency of your evidence; that if the present system of taking the rent and charges by stoppages were abolished, there would be a difficulty in conducting the business, from the shuffling character of some of the workmen?—If the workmen did not work steadily and regularly, the machinery would be completely useless. I should be receiving no rent, and I should be receiving no goods upon the sale of which I might derive a profit.

2215. Would it not be in your power to dismiss a workman of that character?—Unquestionably it would be in my power to do so.

2216. Do you think it essential to the conduct of your business, that the power of recovering rent by stoppages should still continue to exist?—I do think it essential that it should continue to exist; because the manufacture being of a domestic kind, and the frames being away from our immediate control, it is necessary we should have some guarantee that our frames are being worked to us, and that even if they are not working to us, we should be receiving something for the wear and tear of them.

2217. Would there not be a sufficient guarantee in the power you would have of dismissing a workman, if he did not conduct himself in a proper manner?—That might in some instances be sufficient, but not in all.

2218. Do not you think there might be the advantage in making it the interest of the employer to employ only the steady and good men?—It is clearly to the advantage of the employer at all times to employ steady and good men.

2219. Is it not the effect of abolishing the payment of rent by stoppages, to render manufacturers careless as to the men they employ?—No; I think, generally speaking, they are anxious to employ good and steady workmen.

2220. But the employer always has an absolute power to recover his rent by stopping it out of the wages?—Yes.

2221. Without reference to the character of the men at all?—Yes.

2222. *Chairman.*] I think you have said that you have a hundred independent frames?—I said that, occasionally, beyond my own frames, I employ as many as a hundred; not regularly, but occasionally.

2223. You have not an annual engagement to take those frames, but you only take them for the time you want them?—Just for the time I want them.

2224. You have said that the operatives would rather have half work than no work at all?—Unquestionably.

2225. Does not that arise a good deal from the fear that if they do not have work even at starvation wages, they would, when trade was more brisk, lose their employment?—No.

2226. Is not that their fear?—No; I do not think that that is their fear at all; I think it arises simply from the circumstance that they would rather have half work than no work at all; that their condition is better with only half work than with no work; that with no work they would have to fall back upon the parish, breaking up their little homes, which they are very reluctant to do, and therefore they would rather struggle on with only half work than with no work.

2227. Would they not frequently be in a less miserable condition, if they were on the parish, than that in which they are, with the small wages they now get?—It depends partly upon the branch; if they are engaged in the wrought hose branch, half work would not probably amount to more than is given as parish relief, and in some cases possibly not to so much; but I think it certainly to the advantage of the workman to be struggling to keep up his independence of character, rather than become a pauper dependent on the public purse, and that is the feeling of the workmen themselves generally; that they would rather put up with great privations than submit to go into the parish union.

2228. I think you have said that labour is regulated by supply and demand?—Yes.

2229. But is that so always in the hosiery trade?—I should say generally, if not always.

2230. Is it not often to the interest of a hosier to increase his stock very much

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more than he has a demand for it, in consequence of having frames that he wants to let?—No, I think not; if a manufacturer increases his stock and employs his hands in a flat time, he does it probably, partly for the sake of his rents, and partly for the sake of keeping his hands in employment; that is very frequently the case, and he is enabled, being a capitalist, to keep the produce of this labour till there is a demand for it; it equalises the supply of labour, so that when a brisk trade springs up, the probability is, that with this apparently over-supply, he has no more goods than is required to supply the demand that springs up.

2231. But is it not also partly with a view to obtain a rent for his frame?—Partly.

2232. To obtain a return for that investment in which he has laid out his money?—That enters into his calculation, no doubt, to a certain extent.

2233. You have been asked whether slow hands are not often employed merely for the sake of obtaining a rent for the frame; and your answer was, that it is the interest of any manufacturer who has any trade to get his work quickest done?—Yes, to get a fair amount of work from his frames.

2234. It frequently happens, when trade is bad, that no manufacturer at all has a good trade; would it not be his interest, provided he wanted simply to keep his frames employed, rather than to produce a large quantity of work, to employ slow hands, in order to get the rent of his frames?—It might be to his interest to get comparatively little work from the frames.

2235. Because he would accumulate his stock in it too much?—Precisely so.

2236. Sir *H. Halford.*] With regard to the number of narrow frames employed, do you think it is more than the demand for the work requires?—In a flat time it is; in a brisk time, it is scarcely enough. It is not long since there was quite a scarcity of wrought hose hands, and there was a scarcity of fashioned goods in the market.

2237. *Chairman.*] I think you have said that you never took rent, in case of a workman being ill?—I never do.

2238. Is not such a practice in the trade very common?—I should say it is exceedingly uncommon.

2239. Does the rent stop provided the frame is on the workman's premises if he is ill, and he gives notice of it?—I should say there is very sledom any rent taken when a man is ill.

2240. I presume you would think it wrong and disgraceful if you were to act in that manner yourself?—It might be strictly legal for me to do so.

2241. But would it be strictly honourable, do you think?—It would not be, perhaps, strictly humane to do so; it is not what I would do in my own individual case, and I do not think it is done by the great manufacturers of Leicester.

2242. Stinting, I think you say, is not carried out, and is not chargeable upon the manufacturers?—I think not.

2243. But there are cases, are there not, in which it is done by the middlemen?—I think so from what I have heard; I am not aware of cases of that kind myself, but I have heard that such is the practice with some people, and that they do spread the work over more frames than they ought.

2244. I presume you are of opinion that trade could not be carried on without middlemen?—I think it is impossible to do so.

2245. Has not a middleman, under the present system of frame-rents and charges, a great inducement to be extremely hard and tyrannical over the workmen he employs?—I do not think the system of rents and charges is any inducement to overcharge the men.

2246. Should you not think it hard that in order to obtain employment on a larger number of frames he should stint the work that is given out by the manufacturer for a limited number of framework-knitters?—Certainly, it would be better that he should give out full work and take full rent, or that if he gave out only half work, he should take only half rent.

2247. Do you not think that that practice is by far too common?—I cannot speak to the commonness of it.

2248. But it is done?—I have heard it is done.

2249. Mr. *Ingham.*] If, when trade was flat, he were to give out full work to those he employed, would not the consequence of that be, that half his usual hands would be unemployed?—Unquestionably.

2250. Would not the men themselves prefer such an arrangement of the work as would give partial employment to all, rather than that some should be in full work and others starving?—The men would think themselves ill used if they had not

not a portion of the work given out. I was conversing with a middleman lately, who said this: "When I have only half work for my frames, instead of giving out full work to a small number, I give out half-work to a great number, because the men say, 'Why should I be turned off; why should I not have my share of this work as well as any other?'" I asked him, "When you do so, do you take half rent and charges, or do you take full rent and charges?" he said: "I only take rent and charges for half work, if I only give them half work; but the men are exceedingly anxious to have a share of the work there is to do."

2251. Suppose he exacted the full rent when he gave out only half work, that would be only another mode of reducing the wages in a flat time?—Precisely; I have so stated before, it is another form of reducing wages; there is a superabundance of labour in the market, and consequently he is obliged to make a worse bargain for the workmen than he would make if there was no such superabundance.

2252. *Chairman.*] Under the stoppage system, in a slack time, is it not the interest of the employer to deal out a limited quantity of work?—Probably that may be so.

2253. Would it not be his study, without any stoppage, to produce the greatest quantity of work by the least amount of machinery?—It is very likely he might be anxious to get a small quantity of work done.

2254. Would you not imagine it best for the trade that you should obtain the largest quantity of work from the least amount of machinery; would not that be a general principle?—It would appear to be so.

2255. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I will return to the statement made by Mr. John Biggs in his evidence, to which I have before called your attention; he put the cost of five frames at 25 *l.*, and after five years, he says, they would require an expenditure of 22 *l.* 10 *s.* for repairs; then he says, that in another five years they would require another expenditure of 22 *l.* 10 *s.*; in another five years another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, and in another five years another 22 *l.* 10 *s.*; he makes the return for those frames for the first five years 71 *l.* 5 *s.*, for the second five years 71 *l.* 5 *s.*, for the third five years 71 *l.* 5 *s.*, for the fourth five years 71 *l.* 5 *s.*; and then he says the frames would be worn out, and would be sold as carcases. But, in the meantime, he makes the whole first cost of the frames themselves 25 *l.*, and the charges for each set of repairs 22 *l.* 10 *s.*, making altogether, including the first cost of the frames, 92 *l.* 10 *s.*; then he makes the whole return from the workmen for the 20 years, 285 *l.*, and he deducts from that the amount of the cost of the frames and the repairs, and the whole charges he has been put to, 92 *l.* 10 *s.*, leaving 192 *l.* 10 *s.* as the return upon his capital in 20 years. Will you be good enough, as you say you doubt the accuracy of that statement, to say in what respect you consider it to be incorrect, and I am anxious that you should do so, because it has been stated by many witnesses that there is a great inducement for persons who let out frames to spread the work in consequence of the rent they obtain for the use of their frames; will you state what your opinion is upon that subject, and whether you think Mr. Biggs is correct or incorrect in his view?—I have stated before, that the cost which Mr. Biggs has assumed here of 5 *l.* per frame is incorrect; that it ought to be 7 *l.* or 7 *l.* 10 *s.*; the next error or deviation from my own opinion is, that a frame, instead of going five years without requiring repair, will only go about three years or three years and a half; that is about the average time which most manufacturers consider a frame will go, supposing it to be kept in good working condition. The fact is, if you are not anxious to keep your frame in good repair, so as to produce good work, you may work a frame down so as to be worth comparatively little; but if you are anxious to keep your frame in good repair, you will expend more money in the repair of it, and it will return you comparatively less.

2256. Are there any other inaccuracies that you can point out in the statement of Mr. Biggs to which I have called your attention?—Upon the individual calculation, I do not see any other inaccuracies, but I say the thing is founded on a fallacy in this respect, because I do not take the profits on five individual frames, but the profits I derive from the whole of my machinery, and then I find in doing so that the profits are not larger than the fair average profits of other trades.

2257. Mr. *Wickham.*] What do you call fair average profit?—I would say 10 per cent.

2258. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You say you would take it upon the average; was it not a fair thing to try it by five frames; if it were tried by a hundred would not the same result appear?—No; I think these cases are selected for the purpose of

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producing an impression; if I took 100 frames selected indiscriminately, I am satisfied they would produce no such result as this.

2259. Will you show how; it is no particular frame he is trying, but he takes five frames indiscriminately?—I dispute, in the first instance, the accuracy of the whole affair; I say that the frames will cost more than 5 *l.* each, and that they will not go the period that Mr. Biggs speaks of; and, as I mentioned before, if such large profits could be got from frames, and if the profits in the hosiery business on the sale of goods added to that were so large, there is no question that there would very soon be a great number of people who would go into the hosiery manufacture for the sake of these large profits, and so reduce the profits to the average profits of other trades.

2260. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not possible that there may be more middlemen and other persons receiving profits than are required for the conduct of the trade?—It is questionable whether there are more middlemen than are required for the conducting of the hosiery business.

2261. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And if there be, would you regulate the number by Act of Parliament?—Most unquestionably I should not; I think it is clearly to the advantage of the workmen to have a middleman; both time and labour are saved by the employment of middlemen; it is as much to the advantage of the workmen as it is to the manufacturers.

2262. Sir *H. Halford.*] My question was, whether there are not more persons, in point of number, who are recipients of profit, as distinguished from wages, than are necessary for the conduct of the trade?—I cannot give an opinion whether there are more middlemen than are required.

2263. *Chairman.*] The advantage to be derived by the workmen from the employment of middlemen is, supposing the middlemen to be thoroughly honest?—Yes.

2264. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You say you are of opinion, that frames will wear out in three years; and yet I think you told me, a short time ago, that you have known them frequently last for seven, eight, nine, or even ten years?—Not frequently; occasionally.

2265. Still you come to the conclusion, that the average would be three years rather than five?—Yes.

2266. So that the difference of opinion between you and Mr. Biggs is upon the question how long a frame would last?—Yes.

2267. That is the whole inaccuracy in that statement, together with the inaccuracy with regard to the first cost?—These cases are exceedingly few; probably they are cases of women who will do but little work, having household matters to attend to; such persons may possibly make a frame last for nine years, though that is a long period; cases of that kind are so few, that they are scarcely to be taken into consideration in the calculation.

2268. But you will admit that Mr. John Biggs, who has been a frame-owner for 20 years at least, would have some idea how long his frames will last?—He ought to have, unquestionably; he ought also to have some idea of the value of a frame with a new inside; and I am quite certain, that if the whole number of the frame-builders or frame-smiths were inquired of respecting the value of such a frame, you would find my statement of 7*l.* or 7*l.* 10*s.* a correct one.

2269. I understand you to say that you do not yourself (and I quite believe that to be strictly correct) charge rent when a frame is not employed?—Yes.

2270. And you say you do not think that that practice is generally or to any large extent carried out?—Yes.

2271. It has been already stated here by Mr. William Cummings, that it is customary for a frame-smith to let a perfect frame out at 6 *d.* a week to a middleman, and that the middleman or hosier relets that frame to the workman at 1 *s.* a week; is that the case?—When that is the case, he takes the frame subject to the condition of paying for it whether it is in work or not; possibly that frame may be idle for a portion of the year, but still he has to pay whether it is in work or not; the rent, therefore, is made lower to meet such an emergency.

2272. But is it not the fact, that middlemen and hosiers both give out partial work and take full rent; do you know of any such instance?—I know of no such instances.

2273. And you do not believe there are such?—I do not say that; but I say that they are the exceptions, and not the rule by any means.

2274. *Chairman.*] But there is no reason why they should not be the rule, and

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not the exception?—I do not think our Leicester manufacturers are worse than other tradesmen.

2275. I am only trying to show that it is in their power; I am not assuming that they would do it?—It is certainly within the bounds of possibility that it might be so.

2276. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Then you are of opinion, notwithstanding the evidence that has been given here by manufacturers, middlemen, and workmen, that their statement that rent is charged when half work, or a quarter work, or even no work is given out, is totally incorrect?—I do not mean to say it is incorrect; I say there may be cases of that kind, though I do not know of them; but I say such a state of things is not fairly to be charged upon the whole body, either of the middlemen or manufacturers.

2277. We are not charging it upon the whole body of men, because you declare that you do not do it and many other men do not do it; but when masters, middlemen, and workmen come forward, and say it is a common practice, do you not believe it to be a common practice?—I do not believe it to be a common practice. I believe, particularly in the case of the workmen, that they have an object to accomplish, and that they do not hesitate to state what is incorrect in order to accomplish that object.

2278. Will that apply to the middlemen also?—Partly.

2279. And to the masters also?—And to the masters also.

2280. You say, "having an object to accomplish;" what do you think is their object?—To do away apparently with rents and charges.

2281. What do you think is the object of the masters and middlemen?—With regard to the workmen, I believe that the whole of this agitation is for the sake of getting a living out of the men. We know it to be the case in Leicester, that Messrs. Buckby and Elliott are receiving 1*d.* a frame from a considerable number of frames; and it is clearly their interest to keep up this agitation, in order that they may get a living by so doing. It is notorious in Leicester that these men do get a living by this agitation.

2282. Lord *J. Manners.*] Supposing their agitation should be successful, that motive would cease?—Yes, that motive would cease.

2283. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Agreeing that they may have some interested motive in being employed by their fellow-workmen to do certain things, and that they are paid for so doing, as most men are in such cases, do you think the same motives apply to the manufacturers and middlemen who have given evidence upon this subject here?—Not exactly the same motives. They may have other motives. It is not for me to say what their other motives may be, though I may have my own opinion about them.

2284. Is there any difficulty in ascertaining the amount of charges in the various branches of the trade which are made against the workmen, if the hosiers and middlemen were desirous of ascertaining it?—I should think not; there is a rule regulating all these matters; a frame paying a shilling rent is generally subject to a charge for standing at 3*d.*; a frame of 1*s.* 6*d.* a charge of 6*d.* a frame; and 2*s.* will be the charge at 9*d.*

2285. Therefore there would be no difficulty in obtaining that information?—No, but middlemen would be able to give you evidence upon that subject better than I can.

2286. Would it be difficult or practicable to arrange the charges so as to pay the man a net rate of wages in lieu of taking rent and charges?—I cannot explain that better than it is explained in Mr. Biggs' own words, which I think will show that really the net system cannot be carried out, for you would have to have one price for A, another price for B, and a third for C, and so on. The net system really cannot be carried out; that is Mr. Biggs' own explanation, which I quite agree with. I saw the difficulty previous to his so clearly explaining it upon the first day of his examination; and with reference to the advocates of this change I may state, that they are not agreed on any system. If you refer to Mr. Buckby's evidence, you will find he says that Mr. Biggs' poundage system is not perfect and pure; he says it is as liable to abuse as any other system. The Chairman, I find, put this question to him: "Besides being of advantage, in point of money, as between the manufacturer and the workman, would it not have this benefit also, that it would produce a more friendly feeling between the manufacturer and the workman?" His answer was, "Decidedly so; for instance, in the shop I work in, when we have anything to do, when Mr. Biggs adopted his system of a penny in the shilling for each shilling's worth of work that was

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taken into the warehouse, our master adopted the system of taking three halfpence in the shilling; but still this system would neither be perfect or pure, because another middleman, who worked under Mr. Biggs, went home and adopted a system, I think, of $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ in the shilling, and another wanted to adopt the system of $3d.$ in the shilling; there might be persons come in, and say, 'I will have $5d.$ out of the shilling.'" So that even the advocates for this change are not agreed themselves upon the best system to adopt; one advocates the net system and another the poundage system, and they really are not agreed upon what is the best system to adopt.

2287. Sir *H. Halford.*] Might not that observation apply to wages generally; that one man might say he would give so much wages, and another so much?—There is generally in our trade a certain price paid for a certain kind of work.

2288. That is to say, there is an influence which regulates those things?—There is.

2289. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You are quite aware that the object of this Committee is to ascertain whether anything can be done, and, if anything, what? and that, therefore, we are asking for different suggestions on the subject?—Yes.

2290. Is there any valid reason, besides custom, why a middleman should not be paid by the hosier rather than by the several workmen; and if so, what is that reason?—If you had your frames in a factory, there would be no difficulty in paying middlemen to superintend; but it is altogether different where the frames are in the shop of a workman, where the men work when they please, and do much or do little work; the thing is altogether altered in its complexion then.

2291. But are there any valid reasons that you can see why the middleman should not be paid by the manufacturers?—Yes.

2292. Give us those reasons?—Supposing I employ a middleman, and agree to pay him a certain price for the superintendence of the work from a certain shop; the workman will probably do no work at all in some weeks; and all the while I am paying this middleman for, but deriving no profit from, his superintendence, because there is nothing to superintend; the hands have brought no work in, but still I have to pay him whether he is of use to me or not. That is one reason why it would not answer my purpose to employ a middleman, because there would be sometimes nothing to superintend; there is no regularity.

2293. Is not that rather an obstacle with reference to the amount of work, and not with reference to the amount of payment; would not the middleman be better regulated in his employment by you than he could be by individual workmen, if there were 30, 40, or 50 of them that he had to look after?—I do not see exactly how it would be beneficial to the workmen for the middleman to be employed by me rather than by themselves.

2294. Would not the manufacturer, or those who have the giving out of the goods, be in a much better position to deal with the middleman, and to agree with him, than the individual workman reduced to half bread would be?—I cannot see how it could be well arranged to pay the middleman under the present state of things; if the men were accustomed to work regularly so many hours a day, and were likely to produce a certain regular quantity of work, I might then be able to pay the middleman in the manner you propose; but when the workmen are so irregular in the amount of employment they get, and in the quantity of work they do, it would be frequently the case that I should be paying for a superintendence which was not required; and that, I conceive, would be a great obstacle to the manufacturer paying the middlemen.

2295. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have challenged the accuracy of Mr. Biggs' calculation in two respects; you have stated, I think, that you have known frames go as long as nine years; some go for eight, and some for seven?—Yes.

2296. What is the shortest time within which you have known frames to be worn out, or require renewing?—I have known frames requiring repairs in 12 months; I have frames now which I do not believe that I have got a farthing profit by, from the circumstance that they have worn down rapidly, and probably I have lost money by some of them rather than gained. In the case of a person (Hill) whose name I have mentioned before, he has some frames making Scotch shirts, and those frames have worn down very rapidly; so much so, that I have felt sometimes rather annoyed at the expense of those frames. Now we must take all these things into consideration in reckoning the profit derived from frames.

2297. I want to confine my question to the calculation of Mr. Biggs, and to an answer you gave the Honourable Member for Leicester just now; I want to get

get at your average of the duration of these frames; I think you put it at three years and a half?—Yes.

2298. You have stated that some will go nine years, some eight, some seven, and some not more than one?—Instances of frames going for so long a period are exceedingly rare.

2299. And instances of frames that go only for a shorter period are rare also, are they not?—Yes.

2300. What is your opinion as to the average duration of these frames?—From three to three years and a half; probably three years and a half.

2301. Will you be so good as to take that calculation of Mr. Biggs into your hand and amend it in the two instances you stated; you have the paper before you?—In the first place there are five frames, costing 7*l.* 10*s.* each; that would be 37*l.* 10*s.*; these frames will go only three years and a half instead of five years, so that the money expended upon the repairs of those frames would have to be expended in 14 years rather than in 20 years.

2302. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] They would require the same amount of repairs as Mr. Biggs has stated?—The amount which he says would require to be expended would have to be expended in 14 years rather than in 20 years, which will affect the question, I think, materially. I have not gone into a calculation as to what profit that would produce upon my mode of calculating, because, as I say, I think the thing is fallacious.

2303. Lord *J. Manners.*] Admitting all that, I want you to give us your amended calculation?—I will do so.

[*The Witness, after making the calculation desired, delivered in the following Paper:*]

	£.	s.	d.	
Cost	7	10	–	3½ years.
1st Mould	4	10	–	3½ „
2d „	4	10	–	3½ „
3d „	4	10	–	3½ „
4th „	4	10	–	3½ „
	25	10	–	17½ years.
Frames			5	
	£. 127	10	–	

	£.	s.	d.
Rent of 17½ years, at 50*s.* per year	43	15	–
Frames			5
	218	15	–
	127	10	–
Profit	£. 91	5	–

I consider the 4*l.* 10*s.* is too high for the cost of a mould; I have put it below at 4*l.*

	£.	s.	d.	
Cost	7	10	–	3½ years.
1st Mould	4	–	–	3½ „
2d „	4	–	–	3½ „
3d „	4	–	–	3½ „
4th „	4	–	–	3½ „
	23	10	–	17½ years.
Frames			5	
	£. 117	10	–	

	£.	s.	d.
Rent of 17½ years, at 50*s.* per year	43	15	–
Frames			5
	218	15	–
Deduct Outlay	117	10	–
Profit	£. 101	5	–

The 50*s.* rent is frequently reduced by expense attending repairs, such as breaking of sinkers, and other small items.

2304. You have impugned the motives of the working men who have given evidence before this Committee, and have said they derive a certain profit from the course they take?—Yes.

2305. How is it with respect to the working men who pay their fellows for giving this evidence; what improper motive, do you think, is at work with them?—I think a great number of the workmen, in fact a majority of the workmen, do not employ these men at all; I think that they have nothing at all to do with them; that the great body of the hands in the country know nothing at all about this agitation, and scarcely trouble their heads about it; that they do not employ Mr. Buckby, and that it is only a certain proportion of the town hands who agitate and connect themselves with this question.

2306. Diminish their number as much as you please, what do you regard as their motive and object?—I think the motive with which they do it is to get a living out of the workmen.

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2307. You have impugned the motives of those who are paid by their fellow-workmen; I want to know what motive you attribute to the workmen who pay them?—They think it probable that legislative interference may do something to better their condition, and it is not for me to say how erroneous I think that idea is; I certainly do think it is an erroneous idea.

2308. I want to know whether you can say anything against the motives of those who pay these people for conducting their cause?—I have nothing to say against their motives; if they think that Parliament can do something to better their condition, they are perfectly right in employing some one to agitate the question for them.

2309. You have spoken of rent as being the only safeguard against frames being worked to somebody else's profit?—It is not the only safeguard, because with some trouble to ourselves we could prevent their being worked to other people when we are not employing them ourselves. We could remove the lever, or presser, and prevent their being worked; but that would be attended with considerable trouble.

2310. Are you aware of any instances in which manufacturers who have adopted the net system have found that they have practically lost their hold over their hands?—No, I do not know of any that have practically lost their hold over their hands from having adopted the net system.

2311. Therefore these gentlemen do not find that the rent system is a necessary safeguard against the imposition to which you have referred?—I have alluded to one case before, in which the net system has been adopted and acted on towards a middleman, whilst at the same time the men themselves objected to adopting it. The men who are working under the middleman will not have it.

2312. I am speaking now of the interest of the manufacturers, the employers; and I ask you whether it is within your knowledge that any of these manufacturers who have adopted the new system have found that they have lost their hold over their hands in consequence of their adoption of that new system?—No: it is not within my knowledge.

2313. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have any of the employers who have adopted the net system frames scattered about in villages?—Not many of them, I think; Messrs. Biggs, I believe, have a few scattered about in villages; they are more particularly in large shops in the town. I think Mr. Biggs, one of the gentlemen most extensively engaged in the trade, who has carried out this system, has stated that he has given up that branch of the trade, and has comparatively few wrought-hose frames now.

2314. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of the general rate of wages in some of the districts distant from Leicester, as at Earl Shilton, for instance, and Hinckley?—I believe the rate of wages is rather low in those districts; they are a good deal confined to the working of wrought hose, and, as I stated before, that is the worst paid branch in the trade; and I believe there is a good deal of suffering occasionally there, from the circumstance that they are employed upon the worst paid branch in the trade.

2315. You admit, do you not, that the general condition of the people employed in the trade there, is one of suffering and privation?—As to a portion of them.

2316. Do you think it is a fair thing with regard to people in that position, that a deduction should be made from their wages with a view to a profit upon the machinery, distinct from a profit upon the sale of the goods manufactured?—No, I do not think it is a fair thing that profit should be made apart from the sale of the goods for the sake of employing these frames.

2317. Is it not the fact that it is so?—It is in some cases I have heard.

2318. Is not that necessarily the case where frame-rents are exacted by stoppages from wages?—I have stated that I do not consider that the system of frame-rents and charges has anything to do with it. That if those charges were done away with, the men would still continue to work for the small pittance they get now, whether they worked under the net system or under the frame-rent system. I think that no alteration in the mere mode of payment will improve their condition.

2319. Take the case of a man earning, as it appears in the evidence taken before the Commissioner, they sometimes do, only 4 *s.* a week; the value of his frame has been stated to be 3 *l.* or 4 *l.*; he is required to pay for the use of that frame a shilling a week; is it not hard upon that man that such a deduction as that should be made from his wages under the circumstances?—It seems hard that a

person

person cannot earn better wages that that, but I do not think it has anything to do with the circumstance that a frame-rent is charged; it is clearly because there is not a better demand for his labour, so as to enable him to make a better bargain.

2320. But you expressed an opinion, I think, that the number of frames employed upon the wrought-hose was not too great?—That is the case occasionally; in a good brisk trade, it has happened that there have been scarcely a sufficient number of wrought-hose hands to supply the demand, and the consequence has been that their wages have risen in price.

2321. Is that the case at those places I have mentioned, Hinckley and Earl Shilton?—It is; the wages of those men have risen when there has been a brisk demand; probably, at this time, their wages may be again depressed, from there being but a small demand for their labour.

2322. Taking the average of the year, is it the case that their wages are such as hardly to be sufficient to procure them subsistence?—I do not think it is so low as that; I think that in a brisk trade, if they choose to work a regular number of hours per day and per week, they will get a subsistence, much better, certainly, than such a subsistence as they would get in the workhouse; I think they will earn something like 8*s.* per week; some of them, perhaps, not quite so much.

2323. You think that the representations which have been made as to the distress prevailing in those places have been exaggerated?—I do; I think that the representations that have been made as to a great number of workmen earning only 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, is an exaggeration; and that those cases in which such a very small amount has been earned, are cases of women and old men, and people who are able to do comparatively little work, and whose labour, at all times, is worth comparatively little. The statement that I have handed in of the amount of the earnings of wrought-hose in one shop, will show that they earn more than that.

2324. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have given the average, have you not, in the paper you have delivered in?—I have in the case of socks and wrought hose.

2325. I think you have stated that there are certain frames which are the property of parties who are not connected with the hosiery trade?—Yes.

2326. And that those frames are let out at 5*d.* or 6*d.* a week?—Yes.

2327. That is, strictly speaking, a rent paid for the use of the machine?—Yes.

2328. When that frame is put into use by a manufacturer, any other charge under the name of rent is, in point of fact, a deduction from the wages of the man?—Yes.

2329. It is another mode of reducing the amount of wages?—Yes; instead of charging 6*d.*, he charges 1*s.*

2330. So that when we speak of rent it is, strictly speaking, merely that which you must receive simply as the holder of such a machine?—Yes.

2331. Assuming that by Act of Parliament a deduction under the name of frame-rent, which is only another term for reducing wages, is done away with, would it prevent a manufacturer who was so determined from reducing wages in some other mode?—I think it is most likely that the price of labour would be immediately lowered to the workmen; the manufacturer could not put it upon price of his goods.

2332. You will admit that if that Act were passed he could no longer deduct the sum as rent?—Yes.

2333. But there would be nothing to prevent him from deducting it for repairs?—If the Act were worded so as to apply to rent and other stoppages, it would probably prevent his taking it in any other form than by reducing wages.

2334. Then, in order to make any legislation effective, it must include stoppages of every kind?—Yes; and I would state that I consider that this poundage system is much the same thing as if the charge of 1*s.* for rent was made; it is rent by another name; and if stoppages are not to be allowed, it would prevent Mr. Biggs or any one else from taking the poundage.

2335. Your opinion is, that you must take into account the old-fashioned modes of deductions in order to arrive at a net system?—Yes, you must.

2336. So that, in point of fact, the position of a workman, with regard to his earnings, would be, if such an Act of Parliament were passed, pretty much the same as it is now?—Precisely the same; if I make a contract with a person to do work for me, amounting in the gross to 10*s.*, which is to be subject to other deductions which will reduce it to 7*s.* 6*d.*, there is no question that if those deductions are to be abolished, the workman will still continue to work for the

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7*s.* 6*d.*, unless there is such a demand springing up as will enable him to compel me to give him more because I want his work.

2337. When you have arrived at this net system, the continuance of any scale that may be adopted would depend entirely, would it not, upon the supply and demand for labour in the market?—Entirely; as much so as the price of our goods depends upon the supply and demand.

2338. So that the actual position of the workmen will be left exactly as it is after any legislation?—Yes, precisely, and upon that ground I deprecate altogether the interference of the Legislature in the matter.

2339. We have had evidence before us that the adoption of this net system would be preferred by the men, even assuming it would not benefit their position; is there anything to prevent that system being adopted by voluntary arrangement between masters and men?—No.

2340. In fact it has been adopted in some cases?—Yes.

2341. And if it is felt to be advantageous both to masters and men, there is nothing to prevent its adoption without any interference on the part of the Legislature?—No, nothing.

2342. In point of fact, all changes that have taken place in the trade have generally been taken up, in the first instance, by some influential party, and his custom and practice has swayed others to follow his example?—Yes; I am persuaded that if it was found that the net system was beneficial to the workmen and not injurious to the manufacturers, the probability is, that in order to meet the wishes of the workmen, the manufacturers would adopt it; but my impression is, that it would neither be beneficial to the workmen nor to the manufacturers; that it would introduce a good deal of confusion and derangement into the trade, and that it is therefore better to confine ourselves to a system which has been long established, and which is known to act, upon the whole, well and satisfactorily to a great body of the workmen.

2343. We have evidence before us to the effect that in every factory in which steam-power is applied to the working of hosiery frames the net system is adopted?—I believe that is generally the case.

2344. Is it your opinion that if the net system were carried out with regard to the frames outside the factories, the effect of that would be to hasten the adoption of the factory system throughout these districts?—Generally, because we should be obliged to withdraw our frames from the country, having no certainty that we should receive rent for the wear and tear of them, and we should place them in large shops or factories where they would be under our own control, so that we might be certain of having our frames worn in our own manufactures.

2345. Has it not been held by many parties that what is termed the domestic employment of frames is desirable with a view to the welfare and happiness of the working classes?—I think so; it is favourable to their moral welfare, no doubt.

2346. And your opinion is that that position of the workmen would be altered by the adoption of the net system?—Yes; we should be compelled to bring our frames into the towns and place them in large factories, which would be rather injurious to the workmen, both with regard to their physical and moral welfare. I think upon the whole that the domestic system is to be preferred in a moral point of view to the factory system, because bringing a great number of different people together is not so favourable, I think, to the promotion of moral culture as their being in their own homes, and conducting the manufacture under their own roof.

2347. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not the case in the country villages that the hands are frequently employed in what are called the shops of the middlemen?—Not to any large extent, I think; I think the middlemen are principally employed with the wide frames; there is no very great number of narrow frames in shops in the country requiring middlemen.

2348. Is it not the case at Wigston and those places, that there are numbers of persons employed in shops?—Where a number of frames are let out to a middleman known in the country, he frequently allows the workmen to have their frames at their own homes. In my own case, one individual holds 18 or 20 frames, and a number of those frames are in the houses of the workmen. That is the case in Wigston; there the workmen have the frames in their own homes.

2349. But there are shops there also, are there not?—There are shops there also.

2350. Can the employment of a number of persons in shops in that manner be called a domestic manufacture?—To a certain extent, it may; it can scarcely be called a domestic system, upon the whole.

2351. Does it possess any of the advantages of the domestic system?—Probably not.

2352. Does it not, on the contrary, present all the worst features of the factory system?—No, I think not, because the numbers are so much smaller than they are in the factory. If there is an evil in the factory system, that evil is lessened by a comparatively small number of persons working together.

2353. Is it not the case, that in those instances young persons are collected together in some places, without any care being taken either with regard to their industry, morals, or discipline?—I cannot speak to that; I should scarcely think it is so; I should scarcely think that there is no regard whatever paid to the morals of the people employed; I do not think that that is the case.

2354. Is it not the case that the owner of a shop of that kind is not interested in the continual employment of these young persons, his object being to get the frame-rent?—I should say he is interested in it, because it is a very common arrangement to allow him so much per dozen for the taking in of these goods, and if he is to have but a small amount of goods to take in, he must have but a small per-centage of profit to receive. It is to the interest of the workman to have a tolerable proportion of goods to take in, because he receives his halfpenny or penny a dozen for taking them in and bringing them out.

2355. Is not his chief profit often derived from the rent of the frames?—No, not entirely.

2356. In a slack condition of the trade he looks to a profit from the rent of his frames, does he not?—Probably.

2357. In that case, he would have little care to secure any great amount of industry in the young persons collected in the shop?—It is difficult to say whether he would have any great care as to their moral condition or not; I cannot speak to that.

2358. There are young persons of both sexes employed in that way, are there not?—The practice is confined to the middlemen, and I am not sufficiently acquainted with it to be able to answer your question correctly.

2359. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Do you see any probability of doing away with middlemen, except by the introduction of the factory system?—I see no possibility of it.

2360. Allusion has been made to the condition of the workmen at Hinckley and Earl Shilton, and those districts have been represented as being in a worse condition as regards the operatives than the town of Leicester; is it not the fact, that there is no such thing as a steam factory in those districts?—Until lately there was no such thing; I believe that, very lately, steam power has been applied to the working of the circular frames.

2361. Sir *H. Halford*.] But these circular frames are only capable of making goods of an inferior description, are they?—A low description of goods.

2362. In fact, steam is not applicable to the hosiery manufactures, except as to goods of the lowest description?—Except piece goods or straight-down goods; it has not at present been applied to the working of the regular-fashioned stockings.

2363. Mr. *Cheetham*.] You state that one characteristic of the domestic employment of frames is, that it is not favourable to continuous employment on the part of the workman, and that he avails himself of the liberty he has to be idle?—Yes.

2364. Whereas in a factory he must be continuously employed?—Yes, if it is a steam factory; but in a factory where they do not use steam power, you cannot enforce industry.

2365. So that to attain regularity of employment, you must adopt the use of steam power?—Yes.

2366. And in that case you would break up the domestic manufacture?—Yes.

2367. Sir *H. Halford*.] Is it not possible that, supposing the payment of rent by stoppage of wages were prevented by law, the workmen themselves might in some instances become possessors of frames of their own?—They might; they might under any system be possessed of frames of their own.

2368. But, under any system, is not the effect of a rent being obtainable in this way, to prevent men from possessing frames of their own; inasmuch as a man possessing a frame of his own would not be so likely to get employment as that

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profit could not be obtained from him?—He would not be so likely to get employment. I should certainly prefer employing my own frames to that of any other person, particularly in a flat time, and no doubt I should do that, partly for the sake of the rent.

2369. *Chairman.*] If then a more wealthy neighbour were to endeavour to assist a workman by giving him money to become the proprietor of a frame, he would not really benefit him?—I think he would not, or, if he did at all, he would benefit him very little.

2370. Granting that the wages would not be at all increased, by any alteration which might be made in the law, would not the hosiery trade rest on a more legitimate principle of supply and demand, if there were no rent for the tool or machine by which the manufacture is made?—No, I do not see that that would be the case; it is true we sometimes manufacture goods when there is not a brisk demand for them; but being possessed of capital to enable us to hold those goods until there is a demand for them, the evil of a bad trade is in some degree obviated.

2371. Would you give that employment provided you had not the frames from which you used to derive a rent?—There would not be the same inducement to do so.

2372. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Suppose the owner of frames came and offered to do work for you for less than you had been actually giving, what would you do in that case?—In that case, I should probably continue to give him employment.

2373. So that, in whatever point of view you look at the question, it ends ultimately in a question of wages?—Yes.

2374. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say that you do not think the present depression arises from the system of frame-rents and charges?—I think it has nothing to do with it.

2375. You think it arises from other causes, such as changes of fashion, improved machinery, and competition?—Precisely.

2376. You think that cases in which excessive rents and charges are made are the exceptions, and not the rule?—Certainly.

2377. You think that if rent and charges were abolished, wages would be reduced to the same extent?—I do.

2378. You think wages would be reduced?—Yes.

2379. And that any legislation on this subject would be delusive and inoperative?—I do think so, certainly.

2380. Mr. *Mundy.*] You have told us that it is not necessary to pursue the rent and charges system where frames are employed in factories?—Where the machinery is propelled by steam-power.

2381. Which system is generally pursued in factories?—In factories where the machinery is not propelled by steam-power, I think the rent and charges system is generally pursued, but there are cases in which the net system has been adopted.

2382. In your own case, how many are employed in a factory?—I have not any that are, properly speaking, employed in a factory; there are some of them in what may be called shops, not exceeding six or eight at a time. There is one man who holds 18 or 20 frames, but a portion of them are in the houses of the workmen themselves.

2383. You do not pursue the factory system?—I do not.

Mr. *John Baines,* called in; and Examined.

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2384. *Chairman.*] I THINK you are extensively engaged in the hosiery manufacture in Leicester?—I am.

2385. How many frames do you employ?—From 250 to 300.

2386. How long have you been in the trade?—I have been a manufacturer 20 years.

2387. Is your system the rent system or the net system?—Entirely the rent system.

2388. Are the frames you employ all your own?—Not all.

2389. What proportion of them are your own?—I have about 200 of my own.

2390. And 50 independent frames?—Yes.

2391. Mr. *Gardner.*] I think you have a factory?—I have.

2392. Have you many frames in that factory?—About 60.

2393. It is not a steam factory, I believe?—No.

2394. What system of payment do you adopt in that factory?—I take rent and charges.

2395. Have you ever tried the net system?—No, I have not.

2396. Do you consider as a man of business that a system of rent and charges is necessary even in a factory?—I have found it so.

2397. What are the advantages, in your opinion, of that system?—I have not been able to enforce a system of regular hours; therefore the system of charges is an advantage to me on that account.

2398. You have found it difficult to get men to come regularly to their work on Monday morning, and to continue at work until Saturday?—Yes.

2399. To what extent does that irregularity exist?—It varies very much; sometimes a man will work very hard for a week or a fortnight, and then he will drink for a week; consequently he gets no wages for that week, but I take my rent and charges from him, because I find him a frame and a man to attend upon him. I pay the poor's rates, and all my expenses are going on just the same as if the man were going on regularly with his work.

2400. The irregularity of the workmen would deprive you of any profit from your machine for a certain time if you did not take a regular rent for it?—Yes.

2401. Are those irregularities common among the framework-knitters?—They are very common among what are termed straight-down hands; the wide-frame hands.

2402. But of those 60 frames which are employed in your factory, how many, on the average, have you standing idle on Monday, do you think?—I am not prepared to give an answer to that question; I do not make those particular inquiries: I go by the amount the men have earned at the end of the week, and by that I know whether they have worked regularly or not.

2403. You keep your factory open at certain hours, I suppose?—Yes, it is opened at a certain hour in the morning, and kept open till a certain hour at night.

2404. To what times?—We have a system of hours; in the summer we open at six and work till eight, and in the winter we open at seven and work till nine.

2405. Do you find any difficulty in getting hands in your factory?—In a good trade I have found great difficulty in getting hands, because the men do not like any restraint; they like to work when they like, and play when they like.

2406. And when trade is good you find still greater difficulty, do you not, in enforcing regular attendance?—I have never been able to enforce regular attendance.

2407. Is not that difficulty considerably increased when trade is brisk?—Decidedly.

2408. Can you give to the Committee anything like an average of wages?—Yes.

2409. In what branch of manufacture?—Common straight-down hose.

2410. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Wide frames?—Yes; I have a paper here which, with the permission of the Committee, I will put in as part of my evidence; being taken from my work-book, in which we reckon with the men on Saturday; I send down one of my own servants and reckon with the men, therefore I can vouch for its accuracy.

2411. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are we to understand all the men mentioned in that paper had full work?—They all had the opportunity of working full time.

2412. Then any discrepancy in the amount of their wages arises either from their unskilfulness or from their idleness?—Yes; this paper shows the amount earned by many different workmen in eight weeks, beginning in August last. I fixed on that time, because the factory was in full work.

2413. What was the state of the trade at that time?—At that time the wide frames were more fully employed. I have not taken it this spring, because the frames have been lying idle; they have not been employed in consequence of the bad state of trade. I will give you a few instances, and then put in the paper. I will take first the case of a man named Robinson; his earnings during the eight weeks averaged 16*s.* 4*d.* The Committee will see that there is a great variation in the amount of his earnings in different weeks; in one week he gets 13*s.* 6*d.*, and in another 17*s.* 6*d.*, but he had the same opportunity of earning money in the

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week in which he made only 13*s.* 6*d.* as he had in the week in which he made 17*s.* 6*d.* The next man is Kirkland; his average is 19*s.* 4*d.* The next man is Smith; his average is 14*s.* 3½*d.*; Stone, 17*s.* 10¾*d.*; Kenney, 12*s.* 3½*d.*; Gray, 13*s.* 1*d.*; Merrall, 12*s.* 10*d.*; G. Smith, 18*s.* 1¾*d.*; Anderson, 14*s.* 7½*d.*; Scarborough, 19*s.* 10*d.*; Dawkins, 16*s.* 5½*d.*; Bloxam, 16*s.* 11*d.*; Jackson, 17*s.* 3½*d.*; Weston, 1*l.* 2*s.* 5½*d.*; Hunt, 17*s.* 8*d.*; Townsend, 17*s.* 8*d.*; Ellingworth, 16*s.* 1¾*d.*; Moulding, 1*l.* 0*s.* 9¼*d.*; Warner, 12*s.* 7½*d.*; Hunt, 1*l.* I put in this paper as showing facts which I can speak to from my own personal experience; those are the net earnings, except the winding. Here are two men who are neighbours, and one of them has a boy who can wind; they arrange that among themselves; I do not interfere with that. [*The Witness delivered in a Paper.*]

Vide Appendix.

2414. Those are the earnings that they carry away with them at the end of the week?—Yes, these are the net earnings.

2415. All upon the same class of goods?—Yes; and these men were occupied on the same description of work, and had the same opportunities of working in those cases in which they got but little, as they had in the weeks in which they got a great deal.

2416. The difference in the amount earned by them in different weeks, you attribute to the difference in the time they worked?—Yes; sometimes on a Wednesday my inspectors will say there have been so many frames standing idle from Saturday till Tuesday or Wednesday; if I were to attempt to force the men to come to work in a good trade, I should have no men in my factory.

2417. In point of fact, then, if you were not to go on the rent system, you would have a large quantity of your machinery standing still, and the capital it represents, unproductive?—Just so; I should not experience that difficulty if the trade generally adopted the factory system; but so few adopt it, that we should stand at a disadvantage if we were to act upon it; in fact, a man has a finger held up to him if he is in a factory; it is considered that he is not likely to carry it on long. I know manufacturers who have been at the expense of building large factories, and who have afterwards sent their frames abroad to the middlemen.

2418. Why?—Because they could not carry out the factory system at an advantage to themselves.

2419. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But it is carried out by other parties?—Yes; but there are only a few comparatively who carry it out in the straight-down manufacture.

2420. Mr. *Gardner.*] There is an objection, is there not, on the part of the workmen to enter a factory?—Yes, they do not like restraint, and we cannot enforce it.

2421. They get higher wages in a factory than they do in other departments, do they not?—Yes, but I think a straight-down hand, a man capable of performing a day's labour, can get as good wages, if he works regular hours; in the paper I have put in, you will find instances of men getting a pound a week, and in one instance 1*l.* 7*s.* 7*d.* net wages.

2422. *Chairman.*] That is when trade is good?—I am only speaking within a few months. I speak to this, that when a man chooses to work all the hours, which are not unreasonable in my factory, and he is a tolerably fair hand at common work, he can get 1*l.* a week.

2423. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That is a very different class of employment from that at Hinckley, in the common frame?—Yes.

2424. *Chairman.*] And in the villages?—Yes.

2425. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think that the same kind of frames in the houses of villagers return as much wages to the operative as they do in the factory?—I should say not.

2426. Because he does not work as steadily at home as he does in the factory; is that the reason?—In the stocking branch the men have a habit of wasting a great deal of time; if a man begins on Monday morning, and works regularly through the week, he will, of course, get more wages than he will get if he wastes his time in the early part of the week; although we cannot work a regular system of hours, the same as they do in steam factories, the knowledge that we approve of regular hours in preference to others operates as some restraint upon the workmen.

2427. What do you call a regular day's work in your factory?—I expect a man would work in the factory the hours I have named.

2428. You

2428. You keep your factory open 14 hours?—From six o'clock to eight o'clock in the summer, with two hours for meals.

2429. That is 12 hours' work?—The men often grumble, and will sometimes, particularly before a holiday, request the overlooker to allow the factory to be open an extra hour, showing that the men are not put on the full stretch.

2430. Probably they have been keeping St. Monday?—There is a system of keeping St. Monday among the trade.

2431. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] In every trade?—It applies very much to the stocking manufacture.

2432. Mr. *Gardner.*] There is no St. Monday kept in steam factories?—No.

2433. It would never do for such valuable machinery to stand still on a Monday?—No, for the steam power would be unproductive of interest.

2434. *Chairman.*] Is there as much attention paid to St. Monday when trade is bad as when it is good?—I would answer that question by making a statement. If I were to say next Saturday to my hands, "Next week being a holiday week, I shall not give you out work; you would not do any if I were to let you have it," they would instantly want the work; and if I gave them the work, it would almost invariably occur that they would not do any, although if they had not the work given them to do they would want it; that very often occurs.

2435. What I wanted to elicit from you was, whether their not doing the work arises from the idle or holiday habits of the workmen, or from there not being a sufficient amount of work given out to them for their week's employment?—I can only say, as far as I am myself concerned, that all my workmen have material in hand when they bring work in on a Saturday; so that if they were anxious to work on the Monday morning they could do so.

2436. It is your habit to allow them on the Saturday to have a sufficient amount of material to enable them to begin work, if they choose to do so, on the Monday?—Decidedly.

2437. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The observance of Monday as a saint's day is kept up, is it not, whether there is a brisk demand for goods or not?—Yes; the more employment the men have, the more, very often, they will keep out.

2438. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you employ hands in the villages?—Yes; I have, I should say, from 150 to 200 hands in the villages.

2439. What are the charges which it is the custom for the workmen on the narrow frames to pay?—It varies; in some instances it is very trifling, and in others more. On Saturday last I asked one of my men, who had a number of frames of mine in villages, "What do you charge per frame for bringing the work in?" he has 17 narrow frames of mine; he stated that he charged three-halfpence. I said, "Only three-halfpence for bringing it about eight miles, and taking it back?" he said, "That is all." I then said, "What do you charge if you find shop-room for the workpeople?" "Fourteen-pence and fifteen-pence." I said, "That is a fact, is it?" "Yes," he said. I was surprised at the small amount after reading the evidence, and hearing so much upon the subject of exorbitant charges; but I think that that is rather below the mark; I think the custom is to charge 3 *d.* for bringing the work in and taking it back, and 3 *d.* for standing.

2440. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are the 200 frames of which you have spoken, your own?—I have 200 of my own.

2441. Do the 200 frames which you employ in the villages, all go through the hands of the middleman?—Not all, but in most cases they do.

2442. Do you charge the rent for those to the middleman, or do you charge it to the workmen?—I do not know who the workmen are; I have nothing to do with anybody but the middleman.

2443. The middleman is accountable to you?—He is accountable to me for the rent.

2444. What rent does he return you?—I charge him a shilling, generally; there are cases in which I charge 9 *d.*

2445. Have you always full employment for those frames?—If I have not, I stop them altogether.

2446. Would you stop the 200?—No; only that portion that I am overstocked with.

2447. Have you never been in the habit of stopping a portion of the work?—No, I never could learn how to give a man out short work.

2448. Then none of your frames are employed at half or three-quarters work, but

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but when you have not full work for them, you stop them altogether?—I never put men on half work.

2449. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say you do not know the men yourself?—No, I do not know the men in the villages.

2450. Then how can you tell whether they are on half work or not; you give out a certain quantity of work calculated to supply full work to a certain number of men, but you give that out to the middleman?—Yes.

2451. How do you know whether the middleman gives full work to a few hands, or distributes the work among several?—I can only trust to the middleman's character and integrity.

2452. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] It has been stated in evidence that it is customary to give out only a portion of a week's work, and to take full rent; you know nothing of that system?—I do not.

2453. You do not know that it is done?—I only know by hearsay that it is done; I do not know of any cases of that kind myself.

2454. Has it come before you in a sufficiently tangible shape to induce you to believe that it is done?—I should be afraid it has been done, more particularly years back, than it is at the present day.

2455. You say you take rent and charges in your factory, whether the workman is there or not?—Provided he is able to work.

2456. Whether he is there or not?—Yes, if a man takes a frame in my factory I assume he takes it to work in it; he knows what the standing and rent is of the frame, and he takes it accordingly; at the end of the week, whether he does little or much work, provided he is able to work, the deduction is made.

2457. Did you ever try the net system at all?—I never did.

2458. Do you propose to try it?—I have thought about it, but I have never done it.

2459. You have not entered into it with your men?—No, not to carry it out.

2460. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you happen to know the opinion of the village hands with respect to the net system?—I think the village hands, as far as I have been able to ascertain their opinion, would rather that things should remain as they are; because they know that, if it was illegal to take rent, we should reduce their wages by the amount of the rent.

2461. That would be the case to a certainty, would it not?—Most decidedly.

2462. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] It has been stated, and that statement has been confirmed by the last Witness, that you can hire a frame at 5*d.* or 6*d.* a week from a frame-smith; it is now let to the workmen for double that sum; but you would have no intention to charge the extra sixpence, would you, if you hired the frames instead of owning them yourself?—I do not employ that class of machinery, and therefore I am not called on to answer that question; there are other circumstances that should be taken into consideration in connexion with the subject, but I am not in a position to give an answer to the question you put to me. I only employ my own machinery where I take rent; where I employ independent machinery I do not take rent; if I want a quantity of goods made, I say, "Can you make me so and so?" That has no reference to rent.

2463. That goes to the middleman?—Yes, if there happens to be a middleman.

2464. It usually is so, I presume?—No, not generally; there are plenty of hands who bring in their own work.

2465. Do you employ men who own their own frames?—I do not ask whether they are their own or not; I could not say who they belong to.

2466. In those cases, the dealing is direct between the workmen and yourself, is it?—What cases?

2467. The cases to which you refer, in which you give out work to a man who has the frame?—We will suppose a man has 10 frames of mine, and I want more work than he can produce by those frames; in that case, I ask him if he can produce more work; and if he says he can, as he has independent frames, then I give him the work out.

2468. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do any of your workmen bring in their work to you entirely?—Yes, there are some instances of that kind, but they are comparatively few.

2469. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do any of those men own their own frames; it has been said that if a man had a frame of his own he would not get work?—In a good state of trade he would get work; in a bad state, certainly he would not; if

I wanted

I wanted his work it would not matter to me whether it was his own frame or some one else's.

2470. Sir *H. Halford.*] You say the village hands would rather remain as they are?—As far as I have been able to ascertain their opinions, I think they would.

2471. How do you reconcile that with the great number of signatures attached to the petitions which have been presented to The House for a change?—I take very little notice of signatures to petitions.

2472. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What means have you taken to inform yourself as to the opinions of these people?—By asking them whether they would not like to have frame rent done away with, and for it to be made unlawful to take rent.

2473. Then the answers which you have received to those questions from the workmen in the villages have been, that they do not want any alteration?—Yes, they think they would be worse off if we did not take rents; they think that they should not be employed in a bad trade at all.

2474. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is your own opinion as to the practical result which would be produced upon their wages if an Act of Parliament were to be passed upon this subject?—I think the practical result would be to lower their wages by the amount of the rent.

2475. And to any greater extent?—Yes, considerably.

2476. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you mean it would have the effect of lowering their wages to a considerably greater extent than the amount of the rent?—Not to a greater extent than the amount of the rent, but by the amount of the rent.

2477. Sir *H. Halford.*] Does the amount of the rent include a profit beyond the sum necessary to cover the interest of capital and expenses?—I do not think frames pay that enormous amount of profit that many people suppose; I think that if a man's machinery is kept in the best condition, there is very little profit attending it.

2478. You are speaking of the frames employed in the villages?—All frames.

2479. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Although a framesmith would let a frame for half the rent that the workman pays for it to the hosier or middleman, you think there is no profit attached to it?—I say I do not think there is so much profit as some suppose.

2480. What do you mean by "so much profit"?—If I were to take frames of a framesmith, I should take them for a certain period, and engage to pay him whether the frames were going or not.

2481. But you agree that many people do take payment from the workmen whether their frames are going or not?—I do not think it is the rule of the trade.

2482. Sir *H. Halford.*] In the instance of a middleman who rents a frame of a framesmith and sub-lets it to workmen, the framesmith undertaking to pay for all repairs, is not the difference between the price paid by the workmen, and the price paid to the framesmith by the middleman, so much profit?—Decidedly.

2483. Mr. *Gardner.*] Supposing an Act of Parliament doing away with the rent system to have any effect upon the earnings of the workmen, would the effect be to reduce them, do you think, or to raise them?—It would depend entirely upon the state of trade at the time.

2484. The Act of Parliament would have no influence whatever?—Not of itself, it must be governed by supply and demand.

2485. *Chairman.*] Supposing a friendly neighbour were to assist a framework-knitter by endeavouring to make him the possessor of a frame of his own, would he benefit him by so doing; would the man obtain employment or not?—He would not, except in a good state of trade.

2486. Supposing an Act of Parliament were passed, doing away with the present state of things, do you think the workmen's earnings would be reduced by the amount of the frame rent?—I have said so.

2487. Suppose a workman could get possessed of a frame which was given to him by some friendly neighbour, and the Legislature were to do away with the frame rent, would he not then have a better chance of employment, he having a frame of his own?—I do not think he would.

2488. The rent of independent frames and other frame rents would not in that case come so much in competition to prevent his private frame from having employment?—It is impossible to say how much a system would act upon the

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trade; a manufacturer would take various views of the question, and would consider whether it would be to his interest to own frames or not.

2489. Mr. *Ingham.*] I think you say that if frame rents were abolished, the consequence would be that the manufacturer would be obliged to reduce the wages of the workmen?—Unless trade was in a very buoyant condition.

2490. Then the man who got employment would get employment only at the reduced rate of wages?—I do not think that a manufacturer would have anything to do with a man who had a frame of his own in a bad trade; I should not do so myself.

2491. The workman would only get the average rate of wages, and the manufacturer would be in pocket the rent of his machine?—Yes.

2492. The scheme which has been suggested here, is that the owner of frames shall take no rent for the use of them; if, then, no rent is to be taken for frames, you must, in order to compensate yourself for that, reduce the wages you pay to the workmen?—Yes.

2493. Supposing a man were the owner of his own frame, you would pay him, of course, at the same rate as anybody else?—Just the same.

2494. Then he would be losing the rent of his frame?—Assuming that he bought the frame upon the supposition that there was no rent to be taken from him in any shape.

2495. *Chairman.*] Suppose they had equal employment, would a workman who had paid rent for his frame and a workman who did not, have equal earnings?—It would operate the same then as it does now; if I wanted work, I should employ the man who had his own frame at the same wages as I paid to the man working on my own machine.

2496. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If there was a rent system introduced, that would be applicable to all frames, whosever they were?—Yes.

2497. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you aware that Mr. Buckby says, in his evidence, that it is of no use for workmen to have frames of their own, for they are made to pay rent whether they have them or not?—They would not get employed except in a good state of trade; but that evidence goes to say I should take rent whether it was their own frame or mine; I deny it.

2498. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But you would not employ them?—Not unless I wanted goods.

2499. Mr. *Gardner.*] It is clear that you do not think frames a very valuable investment, or you would take care that all the frames you employed were your own?—Yes; I have found it politic not to have machinery to the full extent of my manufacture.

2500. Therefore you do not think frames are a valuable investment?—Not to the extent that other people suppose.

2501. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You do not believe in 200 per cent. being got for them?—No, nothing of the kind.

2502. Mr. *Gardner.*] You are aware of the statements which have been made as to the cost of frames; how much they cost at first, how long they will go before they want moulding, and so on; have you any experience of your own on that subject?—I do not think that frames will go for the fabulous lengths of time that have been stated in this room; there may be exceptions.

2503. How long will a frame work before it wants moulding?—About three years and a half, on an average.

2504. *Chairman.*] Suppose 6*d.* a week is given for an independent frame, and it is let out again for 1*s.*, should you not consider that a very large profit to be made upon the machine?—If I were to take a frame at 6*d.*, and let it at 1*s.*, I should think it paid me very well, if I could employ it.

2505. Is not that a common practice?—I think not.

2506. We have heard from other witnesses that 6*d.* a week has been given to framesmiths for a frame, and that it has been let out again for 1*s.* a week?—I believe there may be such instances; but when it is said that it prevails to any extent, I must meet that statement by saying I believe it does not.

2507. Is not that a common rule with regard to the letting out independent frames?—The last frames I rented, and that was about five or six years ago, I rented of a framesmith, to whom I paid 8*d.* for narrow frames.

2508. Mr. *Gardner.*] But you could now rent them at a less rate?—I do not know; I am not in the market for them.

2509. *Chairman.*]

2509. *Chairman.*] What would be the rent charged to the operative?—A shilling.

2510. Mr. *Ingham.*] If you take them at 8*d.* and let them out at 1*s.*, the sum you would make would add to the other profits of your business?—Yes, I should take it into my account.

2511. It is really only a means of getting your labour cheaper?—Yes.

2512. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that it is, in fact, a wages question?—I think so.

2513. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose you contract to take a frame for 12 months, and pay 8*d.* a week for it, charging the workman 1*s.*, it does not follow that it is necessarily a profitable transaction to you, because, during harvest-time, frames are habitually standing still for 8, 10, or 12 weeks?—In the hosiery trade there is not full employment for the hands more than six months in the year, and sometimes not that; consequently, during the other six months, a great portion of the machinery is itself unemployed.

2514. You are obliged to charge the framework-knitter more than you pay the framesmith, in order to make up for the loss you incur when the frame is standing still?—Yes, and loss on the stock manufactured.

2515. What is the cost of a narrow frame at present, with a new inside?—About 7*l.* 10*s.*

2516. You are aware that a different statement has been made as to the cost of it?—Yes, I have seen a statement of its only costing 5*l.*; I should not know where to go to buy frames myself at that price.

2517. Will you state, shortly, to the Committee any objections you may see to carrying out a net system?—As far as the villages are concerned, I should have an objection to it; I should have no security that my own machine was worked to me; but if I receive a rent, I know I am paid for working that machine, and consequently that my machine is not worn to my own disadvantage.

2518. *Chairman.*] Do you not think it would be better for the trade that there should not be persons altogether unconnected with the hosiery trade, bakers, butchers, gentlemen's servants, and others, investing their money in frames; do you not think it would be better that those independent frames should not be employed?—I do not know in what way it would be better; if they are some one's property, it is better that they should be employed.

2519. Is it advisable, do you think, that there should be a profit obtained from frames without any reference whatever to the trade?—It is a system that has grown up with the trade; but I do not think frames are held to any great extent by such parties as you refer to, not so much as formerly.

2520. What, in your opinion, is the cause of the change that has taken place in that respect?—Manufacturers own their own machinery to a greater extent than they used to do.

2521. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose all the charges of exaction we have heard of, such as taking full rent for half work, and charging rent during sickness, to be well founded, do they prove anything beyond this, that the state of the labour market is such, that the employer can do what he pleases with the workmen; and do you think that any Act of Parliament, merely altering the mode in which the payment of wages is made, would in the slightest degree benefit the workman?—I do not think it would.

2522. Those exactions (if exactions they be) are submitted to by the workman with his eyes open?—Decidedly so, owing to the poverty-stricken position of the trade for the time being.

2523. He would not submit to pay full rent for a frame, when he had only material to employ it half the week, if he could help himself?—Not if he could get work elsewhere.

2524. But you are not of opinion that it is in the power of an Act of Parliament to keep him out of that dilemma?—Not to raise his wages.

2525. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Then the complaints of the workmen, and their anxious desire to have this system changed, in your opinion, are all fallacious; they are not justified in complaining, and their hopes are fallacious?—Their hopes are fallacious, if they think that what has been proposed would be any benefit to them. I do not sit here to say there are no workmen in Leicester who wish for the change.

2526. Mr. *Gardner.*] You think that any hopes they entertain of improving their condition by means of an Act of Parliament are perfectly fallacious?—I do.

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2527. Sir *J. Walmsley.*]—You think that if it were made by Act of Parliament illegal to take frame rent, the same shilling would be deducted from the wages of the workmen, whether the frame cost the manufacturers a shilling or not?—In one form or other it would.

2528. You think that, although the rent of a frame paid to the framesmith was only sixpence, a shilling would be deducted from the wages of the workmen, as it is at present?—It is the custom of the trade to deduct a shilling, but I contend that comparatively a very small quantity of that machinery is employed.

2529. But although there is double the real cost of that frame charged to the workman, you think that in case of an Act of Parliament being passed doing away with frame rents, a shilling rent would still be exacted from the workman?—I mean, his wages would be reduced by the amount of his rent.

2530. That is, they would be reduced 1*s.*?—Yes.

2531. Although the frame did not cost the employer 1*s.*?—It bears so small a proportion to the amount of labour employed, that it would not be taken into consideration.

2532. His necessities would compel him to accept what was offered?—I do not state that.

2533. *Chairman.*] Do you not consider that the best principle of carrying on the trade is to get the greatest quantity of work with the least possible amount of machinery?—That is the principle I carry out myself.

2534. Does not the system of frame rents rather conduce to another principle, that of keeping machinery going, and producing a smaller amount of work?—In a bad state of trade, there is no doubt it has that tendency.

2535. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do you not think that the workmen themselves would prefer that, in a bad trade, you should keep them partially at work?—They would prefer half-work instead of going to the unions.

2536. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Take your own case of 60 looms in the shop; would your men prefer in bad trade that 30 of them should be sent into the streets and the other 30 have full employment, or would they prefer the work being divided among the 60?—The 30 men having full employment would prefer full employment, no doubt.

2537. Would the other 30 prefer being sent into the street instead of having half-work?—No.

2538. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Is it better, do you think, to reduce 60 men to starvation wages by giving them half-work or to employ 30 men full time, and let the others find other employment?—I can only state what I should do; I should employ the 30 and cast the others overboard; as I said before, I never give out short work.

2539. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you know how they do in the case of steam-mills when they come to work short time; do they work one part of the machinery only?—They work short hours.

2540. For the whole of the mill?—Yes.

2541. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do I understand you to say, that you are opposed to all legislation on this subject?—Unquestionably; I think the effect of legislation would be to throw the trade into confusion, without any benefit being done to the workmen.

2542. If frame rents were abolished, do you think the effect would be to reduce wages?—Yes; the wages would be reduced by the amount of the rent now paid.

2543. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You mean to say that, upon the whole, the earnings of the men under a net system would be just the same as they are now?—Yes; if a man did three dozen of hose a week, at 4*s.*, he would be paid under the rent system, 11*s.*; of course we should take the 1*s.* rent. If you were to pass a law to do away with frame rents, we should then take 4*d.* off each dozen pair, and he would then have 3*s.* 8*d.* a dozen instead of 4*s.*

2544. So that his earnings would be the same, in fact, as they are now?—Yes.

2545. Then the question whether that earning could be made or not, would depend upon the state of the trade?—The wages would be subject to reduction, just as they are now.

2546. And that would take place after the passing of an Act, as it did before?—Just the same.

2547. Sir

2547. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Would it not enable the workman to make a better bargain as to the amount he was to have for his wages, whereas, at present, 1*s.* is deducted for rent, by a custom which has been, I think, shown to be exorbitant?—I should set a man on at 3*s.* 8*d.* a dozen instead of 4*s.*

2548. But the workman, I apprehend, would have an opportunity of bargaining with you, whether it should be 3*s.* 8*d.* or 3*s.* 10*d.*?—He would have no more opportunity then than he has now; if he did not like the work, he would not take it, and he does not take it now.

2549. Now there is not a bargain for his work; it is the custom to charge 1*s.* rent?—I contend that it is a bargain; if a man calls at my factory on a Monday, and asks if I can let him have a frame, and if on being told I can, he asks what the rent and charges are, and is told they are 1*s.* a week, and he agrees to come to me on those terms, it is a bargain that the man makes with his eyes open.

2550. Suppose you, being a hosier, hired your frames at 6*d.* a week, and supposing frame rent was entirely done away with, would you deduct 1*s.* a week from the earnings of the workman in lieu of the 6*d.* which you were paying; and if so, why?—I cannot tell what I should do under an Act passed to prevent stoppages; I cannot say how I should act; I should look to profit in the end.

2551. I want to know, whether in case of an Act of Parliament being passed, doing away with frame rents, and if you obtained 100 frames at 6*d.* a week, you would be disposed to let the workmen have them at that net rent, without charging them the additional 6*d.* which they now pay?—I cannot say what I should do under such circumstances.

2552. You are acting liberally in other matters; I want to know what you would do in that case?—It is a state of things that does not come across me in any way, and therefore it is not a matter I have given my consideration to.

2553. We are contemplating an Act of Parliament, which may or may not pass, to do away with frame rents; in case such an Act were to pass, would not the workmen that you employed, provided you had to hire your frames from a frame-smith, be in a better position by your paying 6*d.* only for them, you now charging 1*s.*?—I should only hire that machinery in consequence of my having a greater demand for my goods; and consequently, if I wanted the goods and could see a profit upon them, I very likely should not charge the 6*d.* while the demand lasted.

2554. Mr. *Ingham.*] If, under the circumstances just put to you, you were only to deduct 6 *d.* instead of 1 *s.*, it would be in effect giving the workman 6 *d.* more wages than he gets now, for the same amount of work?—I should take into consideration the terms on which I took that machinery; if I took it to pay rent, working or not working, I should charge it very likely, or adjust it, according to circumstances.

2555. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would it not work in this way; you pay at present 6 *d.* a week to the machine owner who lets you the frames?—That is supposing a case; I do not do so.

2556. But that has been stated to be the practice of some parties; 1 *s.* is deducted as rent from the workman; in other words, his wages are reduced plus that 6 *d.* by the difference between the 6 *d.* paid and the 1 *s.* charged. Now, suppose an Act of Parliament were passed abolishing frame rents, you would still continue to pay 6*d.*, and you would pay the workman so much less?—Exactly.

2557. And it would not alter your position?—Not at all.

2558. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you quite sure that no Act of Parliament could put the workmen in a better position?—I am quite certain it could not; if Parliament can send a flood trade to us, the men will do it themselves, but not without.

Veneris, 18° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sir Henry Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Sir Joshua Walmsley.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Packe.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Ingham.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Richard Michaux Muggeridge, Esq., called in; and Examined.

R. M. Muggeridge, Esq.

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2559. Sir *H. Halford.*] YOU were appointed, I think, under a Royal Commission, in the year 1844, to inquire into the condition of the framework-knitters?—I was.

2560. In the counties of Leicester, Derby, and Nottingham?—Yes.

2561. That appointment, I believe, was made in consequence of complaints of their depressed condition, as expressed in a petition signed by 25,000 persons?—That was the main reason; there had been many petitions previous to that, but it was immediately after the presentation of that numerously signed petition that the Commission was appointed.

2562. That Commission was appointed, was it not, for the purpose of inquiring into the manner in which wages were paid, and generally with a view to ascertain the condition of the framework-knitters in those three counties?—It was.

2563. I believe we have before us the result of that Commission in these three volumes; one of them containing your Report, and the other two containing the Minutes of Evidence upon which it was founded?—Yes.

2564. You examined a great number of witnesses in the three counties, I believe?—I think nearly 600 witnesses were examined. I went to the principal towns, and also to all the principal villages and districts in those counties where frames were worked in the houses of the operatives.

2565. You were, I believe, at another period an assistant Commissioner for the purpose of inquiring into the condition of the handloom weavers?—I was.

2566. And subsequently you were appointed an Assistant Poor Law Commissioner?—Yes; I was between eight and nine years on the Poor Law Commission.

2567. And were you engaged also in the Factory Commission?—Yes.

2568. You therefore have had considerable experience, leading you to a knowledge of the condition of the working classes?—In the several branches of manufacture I have.

2569. In your opinion, with respect to the framework-knitters, were their complaints of distress well founded?—I thought them so; I reported that there was very great distress existing almost periodically; it did not happen to be quite so great as usual at the time the Commission sat, as there had then been rather a good trade; a very good home trade.

2570. But still, in some districts, the distress was very considerable at that time, was it not?—Very great.

2571. You have heard the evidence that has been taken before this Committee, have you not?—I have.

2572. From what you have heard, do you find the same causes of complaint still exist as were brought before you in 1844?—I do not think that at present I have heard a single new feature of complaint; the same complaints have been repeated before this Committee as were made to me then, and the same answers have been given to them as were given then, and, in some cases, by the same manufacturers.

2573. From what causes, in your opinion, does the depressed condition of the framework-knitters arise?—As I have already said, I see no great difference between

between their condition at the time of my investigation and their condition now. If you will allow me, I will read from my Report the very short conclusions to which I came. I said, "The evidence received I consider to have established, that until a very recent period the workmen were, in many instances, paid their wages in goods instead of money; and that at present, though this practice, in a direct manner, has been greatly checked by the exertions of individuals, and local societies established for the express purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Act 1 and 2 William 4th, chapter 37, on the subject, it is still carried on indirectly to a great extent by a large class of employers, who combine with their occupations in the manufacture, shops for the sale of groceries and provisions, and whom the present law has not been able to reach. That although there is considerable diversity in the condition of the framework-knitters, particularly at different seasons in different branches of the hosiery manufacture, they are, as a body, in a very depressed and distressed state, from the very low amount of their ordinary earnings. That the leading cause of the low rate of wages earned by the framework-knitters is the disproportion existing between the supply of their labour and the demand for it, the latter being usually deficient, and at all times very irregular, while there is a constant manifest tendency in the former to increase, and none to adapt itself to the irregularities or the amount of the demand. That this excess of supply arises primarily from the accessibility of the trade of framework-knitting to the unemployed labourers of all other classes, and from the facilities with which a knowledge of the trade, especially in the common branches, is acquired. That these facilities admit of the competition of women and children, of which they avail themselves to a very considerable extent, the natural consequence of which is to reduce wages generally, by an undue augmentation of numbers in the labour market, and particularly those of male adult knitters, by lowering them to the standard rate of such competitors. That this excess of supply is very powerfully influenced and encouraged by the system of frame rents, and the long recognised custom of heavy deductions, on one pretext or another, from the wages of the workpeople, which make it the interest of employers to spread any given amount of work among a larger number of workmen than is necessary to its performance; a practice that is further greatly facilitated by the superabundant amount of machinery which has been created and brought into the trade, by others than the legitimate employers in it, as profitable investments of capital, induced by the customary exorbitant rent of the frames. That no permanent or general improvement in the condition of the framework-knitters can be looked for, but by a diminution of their numbers proportionate to the existing demand for their labour, or such an extension of the manufacture as would largely augment the amount of employment; the first of these means is in the exclusive control of the workmen themselves, and can only be produced by abstinence from early or improvident marriages, or by bringing up their families to other occupations; results only to be expected from the slow operation of improved moral cultivation; that an extension of the manufacture is most likely to be attained by the improvement of which it appears susceptible in the manner of conducting it; by a more judicious appropriation and division of labour, whereby the cost of production would be diminished; and by an increased application of taste and skill in the designs and patterns of the article manufactured, especially in the fancy branches of the trade; that an improvement in the quality of most of the goods manufactured is apparently as essential to an increase of permanent demand, as it will probably soon be found to be to the maintenance of the manufacture, even at its present extent; the evidence tending to establish, that the spurious qualities of a large proportion of the goods made is calculated to lower the character of the manufacture both at home and abroad." Those were the conclusions to which I came in 1844, and I have heard nothing greatly to modify the opinions I was then led to form.

2574. In the course of your inquiry, were there any particular grievances that were complained of?—The principal complaint that was made was the stoppages made from their earnings.

2575. Upon what account were those stoppages principally made?—The one that was most complained of was the deduction which was made on account of frame rents.

2576. In page 43 of your Report, you give an account of the nature of that deduction?—Yes; "one the most oppressively felt, as evinced by the weight of

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evidence on the subject, and one by far the most universally complained of, is the system of frame rents; that is, a weekly deduction which is invariably made from the earnings of the workman, as rent for the frame in which he works. The evidence both of masters and men is perfectly conclusive and coincident on one point, namely, that the amount of this deduction is regulated by no fixed rule or principle whatever; that it is not dependent upon the value of the frame, upon the amount of money earned in it, or on the extent of the work made; that it has differed in amount at different times, and now does so at different places; that the youthful learner, or apprentice, pays the same rent from his scanty earnings as the most expert and skilful workman in the trade from his, of fourfold the amount; and that the practice of this deduction or charge has existed for upwards of a century. On the alleged hardship and oppression of the custom the evidence of masters and men widely differs. A few extracts will suffice to show the nature of the evidence offered to establish each of the above propositions."

2577. Were there any gross instances brought before you of the amount of frame rents stopped from wages in proportion to the value of the frames?—There were many such cases brought before me at that time.

2578. I think there are some of them extracted in your Report?—Yes.

2579. Allow me to refer you to page 50, the case of John Woodward?—When speaking of his frame he is asked, "During the 22 years that you have worked on the same frame, what amount of rent do you think you may have paid on it?" He says, "The last six years I have paid 2 *s.* a week; before that I paid 3 *s.* or 3 *s.* 6 *d.* and 4 *s.* It is altered according to the nature of the work. There has been a deal of rent paid for it. It would be well if one did know; at one time of day it would be 10 *l.* a year. I paid 4 *s.* a week for several years (I dare say for 10 years), and for six years an average of 3 *s.* 6 *d.*; that would make between 170 *l.* and 180 *l.* I have paid in rent for that frame since I have been on it."

2580. Mr. *Ingham.*] Does he state what kind of frame it was?—In the previous answer he says, "I wish to observe that they pretend to charge 2 *s.* a week net rent, and our master has been in the habit of charging 4 *s.* for the warp. If you do it in eight or nine days, or a shorter time, then you have to pay the 4 *s.*, which ought to be only a fortnight's rent; and the machine is not worth above 8 *l.* or 9 *l.* The one I work in would not sell for that money; I have worked in it a little over 22 years, and all to the same man."

2581. He does not there describe whether it was a broad or narrow frame?—He does not, unless it is stated in his evidence; I see, on referring to his evidence, that he states he is working on what he calls a warp frame. He says, "They have a board, and cut them in the frame, and a heavy iron press, which cuts the hands and fingers altogether; and then they put gores into them and form them into the shape of the glove." He is then asked, "How are you paid for working that?" and he says, "By the pound; by weight." "That is, by the number of pounds of stuff you make?—Yes, what the piece weighs."

2582. Sir *H. Halford.*] Does he state the amount laid out upon the frame?—He says, "I should think 4 *l.* would be as much as I have run it to expense."

2583. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] That is in 22 years?—In 22 years.

2584. Sir *H. Halford.*] Now refer, if you please, to the next case; that of Thomas Gascoigne, of Leicester?—He is asked, "What rent have you paid for that frame?" and he says, "Ninepence a week for 30 years, except at the time of the turn-out. I had a ribbed frame of the same gentleman for 21 years, but I threw it up in 1837." Then he is asked, "What rent did you pay for that?" He says, "I paid 10 *d.* a week for that." "What expense was incurred in the repairing of the frame that was in your house for 30 years?—I cannot say exactly the sum; but I think between 3 *l.* and 4 *l.* moulding, besides little jobs of a few shillings now and then. Sometimes it would be 12 months and not cost a penny." "Was it never moulded but once?—It was never recruited since I had it. I do not suppose that it has cost above 6 *l.* or 7 *l.* all the time that I have had it altogether, with all the jobs."

2585. Lord *J. Manners.*] Does he give the value of the frame?—He does; in answer to Question No. 2130, "Do you know what it cost?" he says, "It cost 7 *l.*, my master told me, when he bought it for me. It was not a new recruit; it was only a jobbed-up frame."

2586. Sir *H. Halford.*] The next case is that of Mr. William Judd?—He says, "We pay 1 *s.* 9 *d.* for a frame that will not cost more than 7 *l.* or 8 *l.*, because they buy

buy so many of them second-hand; and then they charge exactly the same rent as if it was a new frame instead of second-hand."

2587. He states, "If they cost but 7*l.* or 8*l.* then, in two years or so, the rent will amount to that?"—Yes, the largest employer that I examined at that time, Mr. William Biggs, now a Member of this Committee, estimated the average return of all frame property at 7½ per cent. He said, "I consider frames a good investment for a manufacturer, if, without the accumulation of stock, he can sell the produce of them as it is made; he then nets the surplus which the rent yields beyond the interest of his capital in machinery and the expenses of repairs. Thus, for instance, in 1835 and 1836, the demand was greater than could be supplied. We employed all our own frames (approaching to 1,000) throughout both years. The rents paid in for the two years amounted to about 5,100*l.* The interest of the capital invested (about 8,000*l.*) in the frames for the two years came to 800*l.* The cost of repairs, sinkers' jobs, moulds, and incidental expenses for the two years, was 2,450*l.*, leaving 1,950*l.* profit in the two years;" that was exclusive of the interest of 800*l.* on the 8,000*l.* It left 25 per cent. more on the two years, but then the 1,000 frames were all employed.

2588. Let me direct your attention to page 49 of your Report; there is an account there of the sale of a large number of frames; 400, I think, under a bankruptcy?—Yes; Mr. Edward Allen, of Leicester, says, "I was one of the assignees under the bankruptcy of Clarke, Mitchell, Phillips and Smith, formerly bankers of Leicester." "Were any frames sold under that bankruptcy?—Amongst the assets there were a quantity of frames, represented to us as about 400; I cannot exactly say what the number was; there might, perhaps, have been a few more than that; they were of various widths and gauges, and, of course, in various conditions; they were placed in the hands of Mr. Benjamin Payne and Mr. James Windram, assisted by mechanics well qualified to assist them in estimating the value of those frames; they were valued in the lump at 1,350*l.* As to the rent of those frames, I cannot be answerable for the correctness of the statement, as I cannot speak further than what I was told; but it was stated to us that if employed the rents would be upwards of 20*l.* a week." "Have you any means of knowing what was the cost price of those frames?—The cost price originally would vary very materially; if they were new out of the framesmith's shop, I should say from 15*l.* to 20*l.* each." "Do you know, of your own knowledge, whether they were bought new, or whether they were bought second-hand?—I cannot speak to that; I should think they were generally bought in a second-hand state. The value of frames fluctuates according to the state of the trade; when trade is brisk, and the frames generally employed, they rise very materially in value; the value of them rises and falls, in fact, as they are more or less in demand." "Were those frames sold under the bankruptcy?—They were." "And produced the sum you have stated?—Yes, the 1,350*l.*; that is the amount accounted for to the assignees; they were said to be, taking them on the whole, an inferior lot of frames." "Do you remember what gauge they were principally?—Varying from 18 to 34."

2589. According to the custom of Leicester, your observation is, that the rent of those frames would range from 1*s.* a week upwards?—The rent of these frames, if employed, would, according to the custom of Leicester, range from 1*s.* a week upwards, according to width and gauge, and therefore would, as the witness was informed, have realised a rental of 20*l.* per week at the least, or upwards of 1,000*l.* per annum, on a property, the intrinsic value of which was thus proved to have been but 1,350*l.* The expenses of keeping them in repair would have to be deducted, and of course the rental at any period at which they were totally unemployed.

2590. The gentleman to whom you have referred, a Member of this Committee, I think defended the system with an acknowledgment that it was attended with a profit; you will find that, I think, in page 52?—Yes; he says, "With our present views upon the subject we should immediately lay down, or cease to employ, nearly all our country frames, as the indirect *profit* we at present derive from the rent of these frames is the only reason which induces us to continue to employ them," that is, in a depressed period of trade.

2591. You understand by that, do you not, that beyond the interest of capital, and the expenses of the frames, they were attended with an absolute profit derived from the rent?—Yes, I think so.

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2592. What is your opinion with regard to profit so obtained as distinct from profit on the sale of goods?—I think it is unsound in principle.

2593. You do not think it is a legitimate source of profit?—I do not think it is a legitimate source of profit; and I do not think that in the end it is beneficial to the manufacturer himself, because it is manifest that if work is given out when the produce, if I may so express it, is not required, that has a tendency further to depress prices in an already glutted market, and therefore the additional production would rather, I think, lower the prices, by perhaps as great an amount as that which is derived from the frame rent, and therefore it is, in fact, injuring the workman without absolutely benefiting the employer.

2594. Mr. *Ingham.*] Then the alternative in a depressed state of trade would be to give up the frames altogether?—I should say that would be the alternative.

2595. Would that be better for the workman?—I think it would; I think it would be far better that a workman should have continuous employment for every week than that he himself and another member of his family should have only half employment for each week of their lives, because we all know that idleness begets all manner of crimes and excesses; and if a man has only employment for half his time, he has the other half to drink and poach, which a great many of them do. The evidence taken under the Commission established that the people living in some of the most distressed districts were foremost in the commission of those offences.

2596. What would they be doing if they were not employed in this trade?—I think they would go to other employments; we have had instances of thousands, in fact, who have taken to other occupations.

2597. Where, do you think, would they find upon the spot any other employment to occupy their time?—I do not think they would find other employment on the spot; but I think there would be this advantage, that these men, as is the case with people in higher conditions of life, would not be anxious permanently to locate themselves exactly upon the spot on which they were born.

2598. You think it would operate in this way, that it would banish these persons from their own homes, where they now get employment?—Yes; I think young girls and lads would in many cases go into the steam factories, where they would get good employment and good wages.

2599. Why do they not do so now?—Because they prefer half work and half idleness, and they like to be their own masters and mistresses.

2600. It would compel them to do something they did not like?—They might not like it at first; I do not take it that anybody is very fond of work; there are many of us who would not work as hard as we do if we could avoid it.

2601. But they would prefer some work, however little, to starvation, would they not?—Yes.

2602. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is there any other manufacture with which you are acquainted in which the same mode of making profit exists as exists in the hosiery business, that is, an actual profit derived from the machinery employed apart from the profit on the manufacture and sale of goods?—None that I can call to mind.

2603. With regard to the great manufacturing establishments in the North, when there is a period of slack work or no work at all, the machinery stops; I need hardly ask you whether it is possible that the owner of the machinery can in those cases obtain from the workmen any profit at all from his machinery?—He does not; he works what is called "short time." Those periods are not so common there, owing to the large amount of capital that the manufacturer has invested in his machinery.

2604. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do you know any other trade in which it is the practice for the employer to furnish tools to a man working in his own home?—I do not remember at the moment that I do.

2605. That is a peculiarity existing in this trade?—Yes; in the case of the handloom weavers the looms are almost always the property of the workman; he becomes industrious for the sake of acquiring a loom.

2606. I know you have inquired into the case of the handloom weavers?—Yes.

2607. There the practice is, that the weaver is the owner of the loom?—Yes; I will just read a short passage which explains it very clearly: "In every branch of weaving, even in Ireland, and in every branch in Great Britain, with the unimportant exception of a small class of weavers called customer weavers, in the north

north of England and Scotland, the material is supplied by the capitalist or manufacturer (generally called the putter-out of work) to the weaver, and he is paid on returning a given quantity of finished cloth. In most cases the loom belongs to the weaver or is held by him. If he has not a loom he must work either at a loom belonging to some other weaver or at one belonging to a manufacturer." That is the case here with the framework-knitter, but there it is only with the journeyman; the handloom weaver has a direct communication with the master manufacturer, which he has not here, but the journeyman has not, the journeyman being the servant of the master weaver. "In the former case he is called a journeyman, and the weaver at whose loom he works a master weaver. The journeyman has no immediate connexion with the manufacturer, and receives from his own immediate employer, the master weaver, a fixed portion, generally two-thirds of the price which the former receives from the manufacturer. The weaver who works on the looms belonging to a manufacturer is called a factory weaver, or shop weaver; a designation arising from the circumstance that the manufacturer's looms are placed in his manufactory, or, as it is usually called, his shop."

2608. Then that entirely accords with your former answer, that you do not know of any trade except this in which persons work at their own homes, on looms not their own property?—I do not know of any other.

2609. I think you say they either own the looms or hire them?—Yes; but not from the employer.

2610. But where they hire them it is obvious they must pay rent for them?—Yes; it is stated that "the master weaver receives a fixed portion, generally two-thirds of the price the former receives from the manufacturer;" he deducts that for allowing the man to work at his loom.

2611. In the handloom trade, when a person hires a loom he pays a rent for it?—That is what they call hiring it; a small handloom weaver, who is an industrious man, will perhaps have four or five looms, and then he lets one to a journeyman, who comes to his house to work on it.

2612. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it not the case in the silk trade in Lancashire, that looms, though in the cottage of a workman, often belong to the manufacturer, and that a rent is received for them?—I cannot answer that question.

2613. Do you not know that in the cotton trade it was so?—In the cotton trade formerly it was.

2614. Sir *H. Halford.*] In your opinion, does not the profit so derived involve, in fact, an unfair distribution of the proceeds of a manufacture, as between profits and wages?—I do not think it is the best mode either of calculating or receiving profit; I think it should not be taken in the shape of rent for the tool.

2615. But beyond what is necessary to cover the interest of capital, and the expenses of repair, there is a clear profit, as I understand, derived to the owner of the machine?—Yes.

2616. What I ask is, whether the owner of the machine in deriving that profit, does not obtain to himself a larger share in the proceeds of the manufacture than is a fair share under a fair distribution as between profits and wages?—Yes, he does in that sense.

2617. Apart from the injustice to the workman, are you aware of any other ill effects arising from this practice generally?—I think it is an ill effect that any large class of the people should be constantly complaining of the mode in which they are dealt with by their employers; I think that is an evil in itself, and a very great one. This agitation has been going on for the last 50 years nearly; we have had it manifest itself strongly at particular periods, as it will, of course, when distress is greatest and men's sufferings become almost physically intolerable; at such times it manifests itself in riots and destruction of property, as has been the case at Nottingham and other places.

2618. You speak, I think, in one of your conclusions of the over-supply of labour being powerfully influenced by this practice?—You have had evidence before you, which has not been contradicted, that a number of people, butchers, publicans, and others, have become the owners of frames merely on account of the high rate of interest they derive from them when they are employed: I think that is an evil, and I think it is an evil that when work is given out there should be any inducement to anybody to spread it (as it may be and is called technically) over a greater number of frames than is necessary for the production of the work. The manufacturers all admit, I think, that they cannot prevent their middleman or putter-out or undertaker (he himself being the owner of frames) from spreading

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the work over a greater number of frames than are requisite for the production of the work. The last gentleman who was examined before the Committee, Mr. Baines, says the same: he has not heard of a great deal, and it is unlikely that he would, because he puts his work out through middlemen; but he says this in one of his answers; he is asked, "How do you know whether the middleman gives full work to a few hands, or distributes the work among several?" and his answer is, "I can only trust to the middleman's character and integrity."

2619. So that the manufacturer is quite unable to control or direct the operations of the middleman, who pursues his own course, without the knowledge at all of the manufacturer?—Entirely; he merely undertakes to do a certain amount of work at a certain price; and then he looks to other sources to make the most of the contract he has entered into with the manufacturer.

2620. And it is to the interest of the middleman to spread the employment he obtains from the manufacturer over the greatest possible number of hands, he deriving rent from each frame employed?—It would be his interest to do so in such a case.

2621. Consequently, with regard to the manufacture carried on in the houses of the workmen, it would be to the interest of the employer to supply them with, perhaps, three frames where only one would actually be requisite to do the work?—Yes; and thereby he is constantly feeding and over-stocking the labour market; because many young people having nothing to do, and having frames in the house, often enter upon them at a very early age, almost for amusement; they are put to them till they get their little hands into the work, and at a very early age, perhaps at the age of 9 or 10, they are able to do very coarse work; being able to do something, and supposing them to earn only 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, although there is 1 *s.* of that goes for frame rent, there is still 6 *d.* left; and the evil of that system is that the child is not sent to school, but is kept at home for the small sum of 6 *d.*, or whatever it may be, that it earns in the course of the week.

2622. But the full rent is always paid on these frames, however superfluous their number may be in a house?—The evidence says so, and I believe it.

2623. Have you reason to believe that there are instances of workmen having frames of their own?—Formerly that was very much the case, and there was a time when it was rather encouraged than otherwise that they should have frames of their own; but latterly many frames have been bought by middlemen, as they are called, and the operatives have found that having frames of their own has been rather a bar than otherwise to their getting employment; and I believe you have had it in evidence, or might have it, at all events, that it is often customary to charge to the men a small rent of 4 *d.* in some places, where he uses his own frame, in order that the middleman should not lose his profit on the frame altogether.

2624. Have such facts come under your own observation?—Yes.

2625. Lord *J. Manners.*] In such cases, who would pay for the repairs of the frames?—The man who owned the frame.

2626. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you continue to take the same view of the system of stints that you took at the period when you made your report?—I do. I find here that Mr. Wood, of Leicester, a respectable manufacturer, states, "I am sure, moreover, that the system of frame rents has induced in the past six or seven years a large amount of employment which would otherwise have been withheld, and saved many a family from pauperism." Then I say, "There may be reasons, I think, adduced to show the unsoundness of the doctrine here put forth on this subject, and to demonstrate that any amount of present good which its application in practice may bring to the operative is far more than counterbalanced by the evils of which it is assuredly the germ. In the first place, the want of demand, which would prudently superinduce temporarily laying down the frame, invariably indicates that the existing supply is already overstepping it; and consequently, that any addition to an already overstocked market must, whatever be the extent to which it is carried, tend to a further reduction of prices and a greater diminution of profit, upon which alone the permanency and utility of all manufacture and commerce are founded. Let us proceed, however, to investigate how this 'security for continued employment,' as it is termed, practically operates. It will be manifest that, as the goods are not wanted, and as they are produced, not by the ordinary and healthy action of commerce, which would be indicated by demand, but directly in the teeth of an already superabundant supply, the first object of the manufacturer is to limit to the narrowest practicable extent the amount of additional production, which for ulterior objects he is induced or necessitated to throw

throw upon the market. Hence arise what are technically termed 'stints,' that is, in plain English, a direct embargo being placed on the manufacture of more than a defined and limited number of articles in each frame, for which number only an adequate supply of the material is given out to the workman from the warehouse. This stint varies at particular times under particular circumstances. In some instances it is confined to what would be three full days' work in a week, in others to four, and in some to as little as two. Full frame rent and charges are very frequently deducted from these reduced earnings of the workman, who, according to the uniform practice of the trade, is paid by the pair or dozen. He would save in those peculiar deductions (such as stitching and seaming), which vary in amount according to the quantity of goods produced, being usually computed and paid for by him at so much the dozen. In all other respects he has often full charges to pay for about half work from half ordinary earnings, which seems usually to be the extent of the advantage which this 'security for continued employment' yields to the operative. It may, and often has been so put to me by both employers and workmen, when speaking on this part of the subject, that 'half a loaf is better than no bread;' that the master so limits the employment because he cannot afford more; and the workman submits to the stint because he cannot do better. If in a branch of commerce forming an important staple in this country, the interests or the exigencies of the moment are alone to be regarded, and no more extended view taken of the advantages or well-being of both employers and employed than that which merely ranges from hand to mouth, there would be undoubtedly some slight show of reason for admitting the conclusion; but when the ultimate influences of this practice, alike on prices and profits and wages, are regarded, all of which are naturally affected by the additional produce thrown upon an already glutted market, I cannot but consider it among the foremost of those causes which from time to time has produced the long standing distress, of which all engaged in the hosiery trade have so often had to complain, and which experience has shown has operated so detrimentally to the general interests of both workmen and employers."

2627. In whose evidence is that?—That is the conclusion to which I came after hearing the evidence of Mr. Wood, and others.

2628. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] That was the result to which you came after hearing the evidence you took, and from your own observations at that period?—Yes.

2629. You have since heard further evidence on the subject, and have had further opportunities of ascertaining those facts?—As far as regards the evidence given before this Committee, I have.

2630. Do you adhere to those views now?—I do.

2631. You see no reason to change them in any respect?—I do not.

2632. If you were told that it was usual for hosiers to give back part of the rent when their frames were not fully employed, you would have great doubt whether the statement was correct or not?—I think some of the more respectable master manufacturers would do that; but it is very seldom that the operatives work direct to the warehouse; I should not think that a hundredth part of the trade work direct to the warehouse; it is not like the case of the hand-loom weavers.

2633. Then you believe that to a great extent this is done without the knowledge of the manufacturers?—No; I think they are aware that the custom is so, but they do not know the exact details.

2634. Lord *J. Manners.*] You would call it a passive knowledge on their part?—Just so.

2635. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You say, in the first paragraph, to which you have referred, "Until a very recent period the workmen were in many instances paid their wages by goods instead of money; and that at present, though this practice in a direct manner has been greatly checked, by the exertions of individuals, and local societies, established for the express purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Act 1 & 2 Will. 4, c. 37, on the subject, it is still carried on indirectly to a great extent by a large class of employers, who combine with their occupations in the manufacture, shops for the sale of groceries and provisions, and whom the present law has not been able to reach." You do not know of anything of that kind existing in that district at the present time, do you?—I have not had recently any opportunity of observing.

2636. When you said just now you confirmed that part of your report, you had no reference to that particular paragraph, I presume?—Yes, because a man who

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has been examined before this Committee from Earl Shilton, has stated that the operatives are still paid there in some few instances in goods.

2637. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Did you know at that time how many manufacturers resided in Earl Shilton?—I have no doubt I did.

2638. Were there three?—Yes, I think there were more than three examined; there was Mr. Wileman, I think, and Mr. Homer, and others.

2639. I think if you refer to your notes you will find that there were but three in the place, and none of them large manufacturers?—I do not exactly remember how many there were.

2640. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you consider frame rent a species of truck?—No, I can hardly regard it as that.

2641. Then when you were speaking of truck being practised in that district, you did not mean to allude to frame rents?—No, I did not.

2642. Sir *H. Halford.*] Was it not a question at the period of your inquiry, whether stoppages from wages for the purpose of frame rent did not come within the provisions of the Truck Act?—It was sometimes adverted to, but I had no specific instructions under my Commission to consider that.

2643. *Chairman.*] Should you recollect the names of the manufacturers at Earl Shilton, if I were to mention them to you?—I think I should.

2644. Did you examine Mr. William Cooper, a manufacturer at Earl Shilton?—I think I did.

2645. Did you examine Mr. John Homer, a manufacturer at Earl Shilton?—I did.

2646. Did you examine Mr. John Hancock, a manufacturer at Earl Shilton?—I did.

2647. Did you examine Mr. James Pausley, a farmer and manufacturer, of Earl Shilton?—I think I remember that name.

2648. Did you examine Mr. William Spencer, who was a manufacturer, of Earl Shilton?—Yes, I remember him; I think there were considerably more than three at that time.

2649. Did you examine Mr. Richard Wileman, a manufacturer at Earl Shilton?—Yes.

2650. Did you examine Mr. Samuel Whiteman, a manufacturer, of Earl Shilton?—Yes; I think you will find, although I cannot carry the whole of the evidence in my head, that a large majority of the manufacturers of Earl Shilton who were examined, were in favour of the abolition of frame rents.

2651. Sir *H. Halford.*] Mr. Wileman expresses himself very strongly in favour of it, does he not?—Yes.

2652. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You did not ascertain how many workpeople these different manufacturers employed?—I have no doubt I did; I think you will find it stated in the evidence.

2653. Sir *H. Halford.*] I will refer you to question No. 5273?—I there ask, "Are you then satisfied in your own mind that the abolition of frame rents would be so advantageous to the trade as to compensate and be an equivalent for the interest of dead capital on the machines?" He says, in answer to that question, "I have that impression in my own mind; I do not say I think; it has been proved that it would. As a large owner of stocking frames and a large stocking maker, I am willing to try the system; I am quite prepared to risk it; I do not think it would hurt me, and I am sure it would benefit the operatives." Then I ask, "But would you make such a sacrifice, or attempt that risk, except by legislative enactment that compelled others to do the same?" and he says, "I am quite sure it should be so."

2654. Mr. *Ingham.*] But he does not give a direct answer to your question?—He does not.

2655. You ask him if he would do it without an Act of Parliament, and he says nothing?—I say, "But would you make such a sacrifice, or attempt that risk, except by legislative enactment, that compelled others to do the same?"

2656. What is his answer to that?—"I am quite sure it should be so." I think he means it should be so by a legislative enactment; he says, "I am quite sure it should be so; I see no injustice in it. There are a vast number of men that employ people, and find them tools, and do not charge for them; perhaps more expensive tools I do not know; but I think it a wrong thing. The frames did not use to be above 9*d.* in my day; they were raised about 20 years ago. They had raised the rents at Leicester for years before, but why they should I cannot think.

think. Only conceive, now, I could get, if I could employ my frames, 500 *l.* a year out of frames that I would sell to-morrow for 1,000 *l.* Their marketable value would not be above 3*l.*; that would be 900 *l.* upon my 300 frames; I would sell them all for 1,000 *l.* The most distressing thing is, that it is taking out of the men what would make them comfortable. As to advancing the price of labour, you cannot pass a bill to do anything of the sort, or lay down any rule; but with the frame rents being abolished, you would abolish those truck-men too; they would all fall together as rotten as pears." Then there is Mr. Spencer, of Earl Shilton, who employs, I see, 300 frames; and Mr. John Homer, 270; and Mr. William Ward, 300 frames. Those are Earl Shilton men.

2657. Sir *H. Halford.*] With respect to the question whether the exaction of frame rents, by stoppage from wages, came under the prohibition of the Truck Act or not; I think, in the interval between the evidence being taken before you and the making of your report, that question was tried, was it not?—It was; it was in agitation at the time I was there.

2658. It was suggested to you that that system would come within the prohibitions of the Truck Act, was it not?—I think so; that I know was the opinion of some persons.

2659. You considered that as a question deeply affecting the condition of framework-knitters, and it is so stated in page 14 of your report?—Yes.

2660. Are you aware what was the final result of that proceeding?—Yes; I subsequently read Lord Denman's judgment; he was the judge who tried the case.

2661. There was a special case agreed to be argued before the Court of Queen's Bench, was there not?—There was.

2662. But, in drawing up that case, all question with regard to the exorbitancy of the charge for frame rent was carefully left out, was it not?—I think, if I recollect rightly, that the facts were agreed upon by the counsel on both sides, and the question was to be tried, so as to get the opinion of the Court of Queen's Bench upon it.

2663. And the opinion of the Court of Queen's Bench, as stated in the judgment of the Chief Justice, was founded, was it not, on the absence of all exorbitancy in the charge for frame rent?—That question was not considered at all; there was no complaint whatever of exorbitancy; it was only against the custom as then existing in the trade.

2664. In your opinion, might not the judgment of the court have been different, supposing there had been in the statement of the case an allegation of exorbitancy?—I do not know that it would have been different, because I think the judges would try simply the question of law. I find, in my report, a note to this effect, "The defence was, that the amount had been deducted for frame rent, the principle of which was sanctioned by statute. The legality of this charge, and the deduction, therefore, is the point at issue. On the part of the plaintiff it was contended, that under the third section of the Truck Act, 'the entire amount of wages earned by, or payable to any artificer, &c. &c., must be actually paid to such artificer, &c. &c., the exception section (the 23d), providing that only materials, tools or implements employed in mining, and supplied by an employer, shall be allowed to be deducted for; and not then, unless the agreement or contract for such stoppage or deduction shall be in writing, and signed by such artificer. The facts being undisputed a verdict was taken, by consent, for the plaintiff for the amount claimed, subject to a special case upon the legal question which will probably come on for argument in the present term, in the Court of Queen's Bench;" it did not, in point of fact, come on for some time after that, but in the end the result was what I have stated.

2665. I think that—(*handing it to the Witness*)—is a report of Lord Denman's judgment, in a paper called the "Jurist," published on the 13th of June 1846?—Yes.

2666. In the course of that judgment, does it not appear that Lord Denman repeatedly observed there was nothing said with regard to the unreasonableness of the demand?—It does. Lord Denman says, "Considering, however, the amount, it may be enough to say that this deduction also is according to the usage of trade; and as nothing is stated as to the unreasonableness of it in the case, the Court perceives no sufficient reasons for pronouncing it to be unreasonable."

2667. Does he not clearly found that judgment, therefore, upon the absence or all allegation of unreasonableness?—It is stated in the judgment, that there is a

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proviso that such stoppage or deduction shall not exceed the true value of such "fuel, materials, tools, implements, hay, corn and provender;" Lord Denman, therefore, evidently on this occasion did not permit the element of value to enter into his judgment.

2668. Have you seen a copy of a Bill that was introduced during the last Session of Parliament, having my name at the back of it, in connexion with that of Sir Joshua Walmsley and Mr. Packe?—I have.

2669. That is simply a declaratory Bill, bringing the practice of deducting frame rent from wages within the prohibitions of the Truck Act, is it not?—It says, "All contracts for labour in the said hosiery manufacture shall be made at neat rates for wages for labour to be performed, free from any deduction or stoppage on account of the use of any frame or machine, its standing, or any charges on any pretext whatever, and the said wages so contracted for shall be paid in full in the current coin of the realm, and not otherwise."

2670. Supposing such an Act as that were to pass, would it in your opinion be attended with any inconvenience?—I do not think it would be attended with any inconvenience commensurate at all with the amount of good it would do in allaying the heart-burnings that exist between the workpeople and their employers; there is nothing in this Bill which restrains the system of payment of frame rent, if I take it rightly.

2671. The effect would not be to abolish frame rents, but to merely abolish the stoppage of frame rents from the wages of the operatives?—Yes; that would be the effect of it.

2672. Is not the exorbitance of frame rents connected in your opinion with the power exercised of levying them by stoppage from wages?—There is no doubt it is, to a great extent.

2673. If they could not be so levied, is it not in your opinion probable that they would reduce themselves into a fair compensation for the interest of capital and the expenses?—I think they probably would.

2674. And that result would be very much to the advantage of the workmen, would it not?—That again would depend upon whether its effect was further to reduce wages; it would beyond all doubt be much to the advantage of both workmen and employers that there should be no cause of constant and frequent dissension between them; but I think the abolition of frame rents would reduce the number of frames that are now in the market; I think there would be fewer frames, and only adequate machinery employed for carrying on the trade. I think the present system has created an overstocked amount of machinery which is not required for the healthy purposes of the trade; and that, in order to get some interest upon what I should consider a bad investment, a system is pursued of spreading work and of giving it out at times when the trade is depressed.

2675. In your opinion would not the effect of the abolition of frame rents be to raise the wages of the workmen to a fair level?—I think the better any trade is carried on, and the sounder the system, the higher, usually, are the rates of wages as well as the rates of profits; and I think, judging from what I saw, and from the evidence I received, the hosiery trade is carried on on a very unsound principle; they tell you, as evidence of its soundness, that the principle on which it is carried on is co-existent with the trade itself, and that it began above a hundred years ago; now, if we were to say the road from London to Portsmouth was co-existent with the building of Portsmouth, you would not take that as a reason why you should still travel to Portsmouth by the road travelled then, and not use the railroad.

2676. Has the effect of the unsound principle, of which you speak, been to reduce wages below their proper level?—It has had that effect, I think.

2677. Mr. *Ingham.*] What, in your opinion, is the proper level?—Such remuneration for the labour of the workman as by a fair amount of industry will enable him to live, but which no Act of Parliament, or any man living, can govern.

2678. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it your opinion that the effect of the existing system is to multiply the receivers of profits unnecessarily?—I think so.

2679. Is it not the fact that the system of frame rents increases the number of middlemen very greatly?—It does; they are the creatures of the frame rent system; instead of there being the employer and the employed only, you have here a manufacturer who, contrary to what takes place in almost every other trade,

trade, is not the employer; though he has, perhaps, a thousand men working for him, he absolutely does not employ a single man except the middleman.

2680. *Chairman.*] Does the present system induce the giving out work solely for the employment of the frame instead of with a view to produce such an amount of supply as is necessary to meet the demand?—That has constantly been stated, and I believe it to be the case.

2681. Sir *H. Halford.*] What, in your opinion, are the evils of truck in the ordinary sense, that is to say, of the payment of wages in provisions and other things, instead of in money?—That wholly depends upon what rate is charged for them; there are manufacturers, I am sure, who let their hands have goods with very great advantage to the hands themselves.

2682. But, in many cases, does not the evil consist in this, that it enables the employer to take advantage of his position to the injury of the workman?—It does; and it was with that view, I take it, that the Legislature passed the Truck Act.

2683. Does not the same objection apply to the system of rents and charges by stoppage from wages?—I think it does.

2684. And does it not apply in a greater degree than to the payment of wages by provisions, inasmuch as it is attended with the evils of spreading work, and so on?—It is far more universal and more general in the trade than the payment of wages by provisions is.

2685. Does it not, in your opinion, tend very much to depress the trade generally, and to depress the condition of the workmen?—It does. Suppose frame rents were not permitted to be deducted from the wages of the workmen, I do not think the effect would be at all such as I have heard stated here, that the frames would be laid down; if there is a demand for the work, there must be a demand for the tool that is to make it; it would come to that; it would lessen, I think, to a certain extent, the number of hands employed at first, but I think that ultimately it would benefit all parties.

2686. Would its effect not be to adjust the supply and the demand better than is the case now?—Yes, I think so.

2687. Would it not have the effect of raising the workman to a state of greater independence, and give him a better chance of rising in the world?—I think so. Suppose, as it has been constantly stated it would, it should have the effect of taking the frames from cottages in some cases, and putting them into shops in the villages, I do not think that would be any evil at all; I think there would be more work done, and more money earned by the operative in consequence of the punctual attendance that is required in shops where they are established. I think the money earnings of the operatives would be considerably higher than they are at present; no doubt they would have to do more work, but I think it is desirable that they should.

2688. Mr. *Ingham.*] The great difficulty is in the employment of those persons who you would remove from the frames, is it not?—Yes.

2689. Do you really, with the opportunities you have had in passing through the country of observing the condition of these people, see any means by which framework-knitters, in such a position as you have described, could be enabled to earn their bread, if deprived of their present employment?—Lately, I think that the army having taken a great number of the agricultural labourers away, there would be a better chance for them than there has been; prices also are better now, and the farmers are employing more men.

2690. Mr. *Cheetham.*] But you would not advocate war in order to accomplish that object?—Certainly not.

2691. Mr. *Ingham.*] You foresee that for the time it must be productive of great difficulty with regard to the maintenance of the parties, but you have a hope that something might turn up that would give them better employment than they have at present?—I do not admit that, even at the present time, it would much depress their condition. I think that anything that would make capitalists more numerous in the hosiery trade than they are now, would be a great advantage to the trade, and to the people employed in it; there are a large mass of little men now in the trade. You will find very few such men as you find in Lancashire, where we have everything that skill, capital, and industry combined can procure, which gives them a wonderful advantage, because they can compete with anybody and everybody; but that is owing to the combination of the three elements I have mentioned.

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2692. Then the effect of your scheme would be to make sad havoc with all small capitalists, and to throw a considerable portion of the labouring men out of employment?—I think that such capitalists as you refer to, if they deserve the name, are, in the hosiery manufacture, the greatest pests to society that can be, because they have not the means to be either just or generous.

2693. Is not the employment of a small capital the first step by which a frugal man attempts to become a larger capitalist?—I think you will find more failures among these small men in the hosiery trade than you find in any other branch of business; many lose the little money they have in a short time, and away they go.

2694. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you include among the small capitalists the publicans, butchers, and so on?—It is exactly that class that I speak of.

2695. You would hardly call them capitalists engaged in the trade?—No.

2696. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do those publicans carry on the manufacture?—When they cannot sell their goods by other means they will bring them into the market at a reduced price.

2697. I understood you to say that they become possessors of frames, and then let them out again?—In some cases they do, and in other cases they will work them themselves in slack times; rather than that the frames should be doing nothing they will give out materials.

2698. Would you prevent such parties from owning frames?—No, I would not prevent any parties from owning frames; you cannot do that.

2699. If, being in the possession of frames, they cannot obtain rent for them, would you prevent them from using them themselves?—No, certainly not; but I am sure they would find it a very profitless business, and that they would soon give it up.

2700. Is not that the natural course of events, to which all trades must inevitably be subject?—A natural course of events is what I want to bring the hosiery trade to; but the present system is one which, although they say it has been established a hundred years or more, is not, I think, a natural, but an unnatural, course of events.

2701. Did your inquiry lead you to the conclusion that there were larger profits made in the hosiery trade than are ordinarily made in other trades?—No, I think their profits are smaller.

2702. Mr. *Ingham.*] But taking the two-fold source of profit, the profit derived from the rent of frames and the profit upon the selling price of the goods, still it is less than the general average profit made in other businesses?—That is my impression; I think that those who, like Mr. Biggs, carry out a wholesome system, who have people working in their factories long hours, and have expensive machinery, will make much more profit than those men who are following the smaller system.

2703. You have said that the existing system has created an over-supply of this species of machinery?—Yes.

2704. You are aware probably that "created" is not quite the correct expression, if the witnesses called are right, who say that no frame has been made for the last 50 years?—That no new frame has been made within the last 30 years.

2705. Then how can the system have created an over-supply of machinery?—Because the system is much older than 30 years, and a great deal more than double the quantity of machinery has been brought into the trade than has been actually required.

2706. The machinery has not been brought in by this system; the system may have retained the machinery, but it has not created any addition to it?—It has not latterly, because there has not been employment found for the frames.

2707. In truth, the quantity of machinery has become superabundant by reason of the failure of trade, and from other causes?—I think the trade has diminished in consequence of the unsound principles on which it has been conducted.

2708. At one period it must have been much larger; this system, it appears, is a hundred years old, and it is only within the last 30 years that there has not been occasion to create fresh frames?—Yes.

2709. Is not the hosiery trade, in point of fact, like many other trades, in which hand-labour has been beaten by machinery?—Yes; but fashion has very much changed too, and that has greatly diminished the amount of wrought-hose manufacture; the fine stockings that were formerly worn, and the old knee breeches having been done away with, men now wear socks and boots; there is nothing to show a fine well-made stocking as there used to be; and then again, there is

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the competition which goes on with regard to the inferior classes of goods made by power.

2710. Mr. *Cheetham*] Was not the explanation given by the witnesses of there having been no new frame made for the last 50 years to this effect, that a considerable number of frames were laid down or unemployed, and that occasionally a new inside was inserted in those old frames, and that then they were set to work?—Yes.

2711. What do you believe to have been the reason why these old frames were laid down and unemployed during the last half century?—I do not think they meant that a particular kind of frame had been laid down during the last half century, but that there were so few frames required that probably a third of them were always laid down.

2712. That arising from the difficulty of finding employment for them?—Yes.

2713. In other words, it has been a failing trade?—A failing trade.

2714. Mr. *Mundy*.] A certain number, I suppose, are always lying down, owing to the necessity for repairs?—Yes.

2715. Mr. *Ingham*.] You say, that as far as your attendance upon this Committee has enabled you to form an opinion, no new feature has arisen since the time of the inquiry in 1844?—Yes.

2716. At that period had Mr. William Biggs adopted the voluntary system of net payments?—I am not quite sure in what year he began to adopt that system.

2717. You heard him give a very gratifying statement to the Committee as to the better understanding that the adoption of that system produced between him and the workmen?—Yes.

2718. And he stated that since he first commenced to act upon that system ten other houses, larger and smaller in extent, had adopted it also?—Yes.

2719. Is not that a new feature, the fact of people voluntarily coming into the system which you yourself prefer, and a very hopeful feature too?—Yes; but that system was then only just coming into operation; they were trying it.

2720. In the inquiry you made, and for which we ought all to be very much indebted to you, there are some anecdotes related, showing, apparently, very oppressive conduct?—Yes.

2721. Did any person attend you who had a knowledge of the parties, to suggest to you what topics of cross-examination you should use, or what means you should take, to test the accuracy of the statements which were made to you by different parties?—There were generally both masters and employers present; the room was always filled, and the whole of the proceedings took place in open court.

2722. But there was no person who specially went round with you to watch the kind of evidence that was given, and to submit to you points on which it was desirable that you should cross-examine the witnesses as to the statements they made. A great deal, of course, would suggest itself to your own good sense; but nobody went round with you to watch the proceedings on the part of the manufacturers?—No, I think not.

2723. Lord *J. Manners*.] In the event of any alteration in the system having the effect of throwing out of employment a certain number of hands, would those hands, in your opinion, generally be the women and children?—Yes; I think almost entirely women, children, very old men, and young lads. I do not think that working at a frame is a healthy occupation for women; I have heard a great deal said by medical men against the employment of women in frames.

2724. Speaking generally, from your experience, and with the knowledge you possess of the labouring classes, are you of opinion that it is a beneficial thing, with a view to the management of a family and the domestic economy of a cottage, that the female head of that family should be employed either in manufacture or in agriculture?—No, certainly not. I think that the mother of a family ought always to find enough to do without being employed at frame work. There are many things which she might do to assist the family, such, for instance, as seaming, which is quite a woman's work.

2725. With respect to the children of the operatives, you agree, do you not, with the statement of the witnesses who have said that their education is almost entirely neglected under the system which is at present pursued?—Yes.

2726. Therefore supposing the class of persons to which I have referred should be thrown out of employment by a change such as has been suggested, you would

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not regard it as otherwise than a benefit?—I should not; I think the parents would then be glad to get rid of their younger children, and would send them to school. The advantage of putting out work, as it is called by these middlemen, has been dwelt upon a good deal. He takes work away from a workman's cottage, and brings him out materials. That is very good as far as it goes, but it is to a certain extent an evil, for the workman never goes out of his own village, and is as ignorant as a carthorse of what is going on elsewhere, or even in his own county. He is at his frame as many or as few hours in the day as he pleases, and at a certain time in the week a man calls to take away what work he has done, and brings him back materials for more work. He really has no opportunity of hearing anything that is going on. He does not know when there is a demand (as there frequently is) for this or that class of labour. I was formerly on the Factory Commission, and that led to my removal to the Poor Law Commission. I found on going into the north of England that there was a demand everywhere for labour, but when I got to the south and west of England I heard general complaints of the superabundance of the labouring population, and consequently of high poor-rates; I then suggested to the Government a plan for removing, with their own consent, the unemployed portion of the population of the south and west of England to the north, where they were wanted; I was, of course, required to report officially upon it, which I did, and that report was laid before the Government; the Government adopted it, and I was removed from the Factory Commission to the Poor Law Commission, with a view to carry it out. I was then sent to Manchester. All that was done upon the subject was laid before Parliament in the reports of the Poor Law Commissioners; but I think that altogether something like 17,000 persons, who were paupers, and wholly out of employment in the south and west of England, were in the north of England put into most lucrative employment. The only expenses the parishes were put to were the expenses incurred in paying their journey by Pickford's barges (which were usually employed for the purpose) to the north of England. The persons who went in that way were most carefully looked after; I have had most grateful letters on the subject, and several instances have come to my knowledge in which persons who were at that time literally taken out of the poorhouse are now living in houses of their own, for which they have given 150 *l.* and 200 *l.* A poor framework-knitter working in a village would never hear of a chance of that kind; he is working, perhaps, in Wigston or Knebworth, or in some other place, the name of which probably you have never heard, where there are 400 or 500 operatives congregated together in squalid and miserable dwellings. The only man they look to see from week to week is one of these middlemen, who comes with his bag and brings an order to do something, and then there is a scramble among them for the work he brings. As one gentleman who has been examined here said, they all rush round him, and they would think that great hardship was done to them if a full week's work were to be given to one man while the man living next door to him got none. They would say, "Give us share and share alike, master. Let us all have the same."

2727. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do you not think that some gentleman upon the spot might instruct those ignorant people, just as you did the Somersetshire peasantry, as to the benefit they would derive if they transferred themselves to some other locality. If such a thing were suggested there would be no lack of disposition on the part of the gentry to assist in doing that which you have pointed out?—No class of men in England is ever left in a state of permanent ruin. An immense deal has been done in the hosiery districts to benefit the condition of the operatives.

2728. At the time to which you refer there was, I presume, a great demand for labour in the north of England?—There was, but I do not think that the people in the south and west of England ever heard of it. I carried the news of it into Suffolk and Norfolk also. They knew no more of it there at that time than they did of what might be going on in North America.

2729. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Has not the scarcity of labour in the north of England always been supplied by the Irish?—It had up to that time.

2730. Arising from the eagerness of the Irish people to get employment?—Yes; they had not then the poor laws there, and therefore they were obliged to seek employment elsewhere.

2731. Lord *J. Manners.*] It has been stated by Mr. Biggs, in his evidence, that the

the averags cost of a frame would be about 5 *l.*; but that statement was contradicted by Mr. Walker, and I think by Mr. Baines, who put the average as high as 7 *l.* or 7 *l.* 10 *s.*; can you say which of those two estimates you think the more correct?—I think that for the class of frames that Mr. Biggs was speaking of, he has rated them low enough and high enough; but I should say that the average value of frames is not so low as 5 *l.*

2732. What would you say, from your experience, is the average value?—The average which Mr. Biggs gave applied, I think, to the narrow frame, and an old class of frame; I would rather adopt the view the other gentlemen took.

2733. After what you have said, I need hardly ask whether you agree with Mr. Walker in thinking that the system of frame rents has nothing to do with the depressed condition of the workmen?—I think it has a great deal to do with it.

2734. Mr. Walker expressed an opinion that any legislation having for its object the abolition of the system of frame rents must be delusive and inoperative; and we have had it also stated in evidence that, in the opinion of the witnesses, the abolition of frame rents would be beneficial, not only to the trade generally, but to the interests of the working people; you have had considerable experience in the manufacturing districts of the north of England; are you aware whether similar prophecies were not confidently made as to the effect of any legislative interference with the hours of labour in Lancashire and Yorkshire?—They were.

2735. Are you aware whether those prophecies of evil have been realised or not?—They have not been realised to any extent.

2736. Are you of opinion that the prophecies of evil in the present case are more likely to be realised than they were in the case of the trade carried on in Lancashire and Yorkshire?—No; I have not the slightest hesitation in expressing my confident belief, that in the present case such a change as has been contemplated would be productive of as much advantage to the manufacturers as to the workmen. I am not at all friendly to legislation between masters and workmen, where it can be avoided, but I think there are exceptional cases, and that this is one.

2737. Is not this case, in your opinion, far more exceptional, and therefore far more justificatory of legislative interference, than the case of the factories in Lancashire and Yorkshire?—I should say so, except that legislation there was mainly directed towards women and young children; that, I think I may say, carried the Factory Bill.

2738. With that exception, the ordinary relations existing between the employers and the employed would seem to be more out of the usual course in this business than in that?—Yes; more out of the usual course in this business than in any other I know; that, I think, is one of the reasons why the framework-knitters are so badly off.

2739. Mr. *Mundy*.] Still we have heard that a great number of women and children are employed in the hosiery manufacture?—They are.

2740. Then that observation would equally apply here as in the other case, would it not?—I think not; there are not a great number of very young children.

2741. In this case you disapprove of women and children working in frames, do you not?—I do, young children; I do not mean to apply that to a child of 13 or 14.

2742. Mr. *Cheetham*.] What effect do you suppose ensued from the legislation to which you have referred in Lancashire, as regarded the factories; did it raise the wages of the workmen or depress them?—I do not think it did either.

2743. If the trade since the passing of that Act has been prosperous, would you ascribe it to that legislation?—No.

2744. I think that since that period we have had some more important legislation connected with that district?—To what do you advert?

2745. To the abolition of the corn laws; will you have the goodness to state what is your definition of the term rent with reference to this question?—I do not know that I can give any definition, except that they call it rent, and take it from the men, and stop it under the name of rent; I do not think rent is a proper term for it.

2746. You have spoken of a class of men who are proprietors of frames, but who are not in the hosiery trade themselves?—Yes.

2747. They let their machinery to hosiers or middlemen?—Usually.

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2748. Is not that rent, or the return which they receive for the loan of their machinery?—Yes.

2749. That is strictly rent?—I do not know that it is strictly rent; it is termed rent by custom.

2750. You have no mixture of wages or any other question in that?—No.

2751. The evidence shows that sixpence per week is the usual charge?—For the common frame.

2752. So that when you speak of a return for capital invested in machinery, you allude to that return of sixpence a week which is usually paid under those circumstances?—In that case it would be so; but in the great mass of cases a shilling a week is usually paid, and that is paid out of the earnings of the workmen.

2753. You have stated that servants, butchers, and others frequently become possessors of frames on account of the high rent to be derived from them?—I said it was so stated in the evidence.

2754. Would you say 6*d.* a week is an exorbitant rent?—I think it very high for a 5*l.* article.

2755. For the owner of those frames?—Yes; I think 6 *d.* a week high interest for 5*l.*, if he can buy his frame for that.

2756. Are there many in this position?—Not many.

2757. If it were such a highly profitable thing as it has been represented to be, do you not think there would be many more proprietors of such frames; would not that be the natural result?—No, not unless they could get employment for them; they cannot get the 6*d.* a week unless they can secure employment too.

2758. Does it not follow, then, that there is not an exorbitant rent derived from frames?—The estimate is about $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., because the frames are not always employed.

2759. You would not consider that an exorbitant rent?—I think it is an exorbitant rent for a workman to pay.

2760. I am speaking of the owner of a machine subletting it to a middleman?—I would not object to his getting $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

2761. I understand there is an additional 6 *d.* deducted from the wages of the workmen?—Yes.

2762. What is the next deduction?—Do you mean the charges?

2763. Yes.—There is seaming, winding, standing, taking in, oil, candle, and various things.

2764. Which of those charges do the workmen most object to?—I think they do not object to any so strongly as they do to the frame rent; as to the charge for seaming, they get something returned for that, and the same as to the winding; but what they complain of is, that the price which is paid to them is not commensurate with the outlay that they are forced to make, to acquire the 3*s.* or 4*s.* or 5*s.* a week that they earn as wages.

2765. Do they complain of the amount even of the deductions that are made for seaming, and so on?—No, they do not complain so much of that as they do of the rent of the tool with which they work.

2766. First, as regards their complaint as to the frame rent; it is confined, is it not, to the additional 6*d.* they are required to pay?—No; they object to the principle altogether.

2767. That is their first complaint; the next is, that in order to secure the rent, the work is spread over a greater number of frames than is required?—Very often that is the case.

2768. Are those the only complaints?—Those are the main ones: sometimes a man may say he gets a bad machine, and is charged the same rent as he would be charged for a good one.

2769. It has been stated that there are cases in which, during sickness, the shilling rent is deducted; is not that a source of complaint?—It would be. I do not adopt everything I have heard; I have published all the evidence I have received, but I do not adopt everything that was given in evidence before me.

2770. Is it your opinion that, in order to remove all sources of complaint on the part of the workmen, any legislation on this matter must include the other stoppages or deductions that are made for winding, standing-room, and so on?—I am not of opinion that it must necessarily include them; but I think it would be better to say there should be no stoppages from wages of any kind, but that the full wages should be paid, and that a workman, if he did not get the seaming done in

in his own family, should be bound to pay somebody for doing it: it is done in that manner by the handloom weavers.

2771. Assuming that an Act of Parliament were passed prohibiting stoppages in any mode whatever, what course do you think would be adopted between workman and employers to obtain another mode of payment?—The manufacturers tell you that it would be the same thing to them; that instead of paying 2*s.* a dozen for a particular kind of hosiery, they should offer 1*s.* 9*d.*; that is the course which they say they would take.

2772. And would the workmen consent to that, do you expect?—I am sure they would; they must consent while their numbers are so great as to exceed the demand for their labour.

2773. Do you think the position of a workman would be altered in any respect as regards the net result of his earnings?—I think it would after a time; I am satisfied in my own mind that it would, because I think you would get a better class of tradesmen.

2774. That, you think, would follow from this legislation?—I think if you had a man and his two sons working in a factory, their united earnings being 11*s.* or 12*s.* a week each, making altogether 33*s.* a week, and being forced to work, as one gentleman said, 14 hours a day, or at all events, being forced to keep regular hours, that would be a very great advantage to them, in a pecuniary point of view, and I think also that the social condition of that family would be elevated by it.

2775. Is it not your opinion that legislation would hasten the adoption of the factory system?—Yes.

2776. And is it your opinion that it is within the province of the Legislature to hasten any change that may be thought desirable in any branch of manufacture?—That is an abstract question quite; the Legislature is, at least, as capable of judging of that question as I can be; that is what you will have to discuss when you come to consider whether a Bill shall be brought in or not.

2777. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is not the change unfairly retarded under the present system?—It is; it cannot be otherwise.

2778. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you made any report as to what would be, in your opinion, the effect of legislation, or have you advised legislation as the result of your inquiry?—No, I carefully avoided doing so. I was not directed by the Royal Commission to devise any remedy, but merely to enquire into the condition of the framework-knitters, and to report from time to time, which I did.

2779. I understand you to say that you thought the result of legislation would be to introduce the factory system?—Probably it would.

2780. That being another mode of carrying on the hosiery manufacture?—Exactly so.

2781. Then I ask whether, in your opinion, it comes within the province of a legislator to force on by legislation any change which he may think advantageous in the mode of carrying on a particular manufacture?—I think it is always the province of a legislator to force on any change which is calculated to improve the condition of any class of the population without injustice to others; if the Legislature is satisfied that legislation would expedite a beneficial change which is naturally but slowly going on, it is, I think, a very important duty to legislate with regard to it.

2782. Would not the shortest mode be for the Legislature to proceed by at once directing that a certain rate of wages should, in future, be paid for all work given out?—That is the shortest mode; but nobody in the world could follow or carry it out.

2783. Would there not be an equal objection to an attempt to enforce, by legislation, the adoption of the factory system?—I think not, because, as several of the manufacturers have told you in their evidence, the effect would be, that they would be obliged (and this is what they call an evil) to own their own frames and get them into shops; I do not think there would be any evil in that.

2784. If they found that they would derive an advantage from it, would they not naturally adopt that system without the interference of Parliament?—That question has been already answered by gentlemen who are better able to answer it practically than I can. They tell you they are afraid that, if the power existed of others working on the old frame rent system out of doors, they would not be able to compete with them; that has been told you by manufacturers who have been examined here.

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2785. So that, in order to settle a dispute between capitalists as to the different modes of carrying on the same trade, you would bring in the aid of legislation?—Not as a general rule, but I would where I am satisfied that it would expedite good.

2786. Supposing such an Act as has been suggested should be passed, do you think it would attain the ends and remove the evils you have pointed out?—I find it extremely difficult to give an opinion on an Act of Parliament that I never saw, and that has not been passed by the Legislature; very much must depend on whether you could drive a coach and six through it or not; very few Acts of Parliament come out perfect.

2787. Do you think it is possible to draw up an Act of Parliament with regard to the regulation of wages?—I think not.

2788. Would not the question after all have to be decided with reference to the net earnings of the workman, and in order to arrive at those net earnings, must not all the deductions to which he now submits be taken into account?—I have no doubt they would be taken into account, but I still think that that has very little to do with the question, whether a man is to have a certain amount deducted from his earnings, whether he has agreed to it or not.

2789. It might remove one source of complaint, inasmuch as he would have no stoppages when he received his earnings; but as regards his real position at the end of the week or fortnight, when he was paid for his labour, his actual wages would come in pounds, shillings and pence, to much the same as they are now?—Yes; but that amount would depend upon circumstances.

2790. Those are elements with which no legislation can interfere?—No.

2791. Then the object chiefly to be gained by legislation would be to remove the source of complaint, that stoppages are deducted before the workman has his net earnings?—Yes; a result which they and I think is an evil arising from the system of frame rents.

2792. But the real earnings of the workman would not be altered by such legislation?—No, nor by any legislation.

2793. To attain the other object you desire, that of removing the workmen into factories, would not that necessarily throw out of employ a considerable number of the village population?—I have already answered that I do not think it would.

2794. You do not agree, then, with Mr. Biggs upon that point?—No; I was surprised to hear his evidence upon that subject.

2795. It has been stated by Mr. Baines that the workmen in his factory have been earning very considerable wages?—Yes.

2796. And that he has kept them steadily employed?—Yes.

2797. That would assume that he has an advantageous trade upon the whole, he working upon the factory system?—It would; I do not know whether he said that he kept them steadily employed all the year round; I think not; in the hosiery trade there is a great deal of what is called season employment, and manufacturers are often anxious to show the names of men, and how much they have earned in a week, without telling you that that was just during the season time, which in some branches lasts about six weeks or two months in the year; therefore their returns look very attractive; but you should hear both sides of the question, and know what is to be said against it as well as for it.

2798. Lord *J. Manners.*] Mr. Baines is asked in Question No. 2448 of the Evidence taken before this Committee, "Then some of your frames are employed at half or three-quarters work, but when you have not full work for them you stop them altogether?" and he answers, "I never put men on half work"?—Yes.

2799. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not the fact that the gross cost of production under the present system is greater than it might be under the factory system; but that the inducement to continue it is because a larger share goes to profit?—It is difficult to answer that question without details that I have not before me.

2800. Mr. *Ingham.*] You have said already that you think the profits made in this trade are less than they are in other branches of manufacture?—Yes.

2801. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In fact, is not the term "profit," as applied to this question of rent, altogether a misnomer; is it not, in point of fact, a deduction from the wages or earnings of the men?—That I cannot answer; there may be no profit at all.

2802. Then is it not, in fact, simply a deduction from the wages of the workmen?—There is no doubt about it.

2803. And under any legislation that would be left just as it is now?—It would not be in as offensive a shape as it is now; it is a thing that has been complained of for half a century; I do not think that the manufacturers and the operatives could have stood in the position they do as employer and employed if the employment had been direct; but it has always been through middlemen, and the manufacturers do not come into contact with the workmen at all; one manufacturer has told you that he never saw the faces of his workmen.

2804. And have not these evils arisen from the fact, that the hosiery manufacture has been for many years a declining trade as compared with other manufactures in the country?—I think so.

2805. Is the net system, which is only the adoption of that which has always been prevalent in the factories in Lancashire, steadily progressing in the town of Leicester?—Yes.

2806. Do you not consider it advisable then to leave it to the natural course of events, rather than step in by legislation?—I do not think that what is doing in the town of Leicester meets the case of the people in villages; in Leicester you have the advantage of very respectable and great capitalists, which you have not in the country districts, where distress is most felt.

2807. But has not the trade been gradually leaving these country districts and merging into the town?—The woollen trade has rather centred itself in Leicester, but not the cotton trade.

2808. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is there anything new or unprecedented in the legislation proposed?—As far as a simple and declaratory Act goes, nothing can be shorter or less offensive than this; it is very concise; that Act of Parliament might be passed and a workman might still agree to pay a shilling a week rent for his frame if he pleased; but that rent could not be deducted from his wages; if he wished to enter into and sign a contract to pay a shilling a week, he might still do it under that Bill.

2809. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you think the workmen conceive that their position will be improved, as regards their earnings, by legislation?—That is an impression which many of them have.

2810. And supposing that that should not prove to be the result, great disappointment would arise in consequence?—There is usually more advantage anticipated from legislation than it is ever feasible to derive from it.

2811. Lord *J. Manners.*] Are you aware whether the same question was not put with reference to the ten hours agitation, in the northern manufacturing districts?—I have heard some of the first manufacturers in England say they would be ruined if that Bill passed, and that it would not be worth while to carry on their works.

2812. Was it not frequently said, that the workpeople were in favour of that movement, because they believed it would raise their wages?—It was said so.

2813. And that if they knew their wages would not be raised by the success of their movement, they would no longer be in favour of it?—That was one of the arguments.

2814. And you do not believe their wages have been raised in consequence of the passing of that Act?—No.

2815. Are they therefore, in your opinion, disappointed as to the result of the measures?—No; I think the Factory Act has given, on the whole, very great satisfaction to the workpeople.

2816. I believe that all through, especially during the more recent years of that agitation, there was a very large and increasing body of master manufacturers who were in favour of working 10 hours?—There was a very large and increasing number.

2817. Did they find it necessary for the protection of their own interests, to invoke the interference of the Legislature to make that compulsory on others which they believed would be beneficial to the trade generally, and to their workpeople?—They sought an Act of Parliament.

2818. They did not think it wise to allow things to take their natural course, and to wait till everybody came round to their own opinion?—No.

2819. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You are aware that the majority of the manufacturers in Lancashire are still of opinion that that was not a wise course for the Legis-

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lature to pursue, interfering between the employers and the employed?—I know that on principle many object to it.

2820. *Chairman.*] Referring to your report, I would ask you whether the temptations of the high rate of interest payable in the shape of frame rent on capital invested in such machinery, have not induced not only most of the frame-smiths, who are the makers of the frames, but a great number of persons, wholly unconnected with the manufacture, to make considerable investments in the creation of this description of property, and whether butchers, bakers, publicans, gentlemen's servants, women of various classes, and persons engaged in almost every trade, are not found to be the owners of frames?—Yes.

2821. That you ascertained in your investigation?—Yes.

2822. Are not these frames very frequently let out to middlemen, the manufacturer giving out work for a certain number of frames of his own, and the middleman taking advantage of these independent frames to spread the work that is intended for a smaller quantity of frames over these additional frames?—There is no doubt they do.

2823. Do you not consider that a very great evil?—Yes; the usual course is, the manufacturer gives out materials for a certain amount of work, and he, of course, asks and requires that his own frames, if he has any, shall be employed first; they all say that they believe that is done, but they cannot tell with certainty; they have no means of positively ascertaining whether the middleman they give out this work to spreads it or not over a greater number of frames than is required; they have no means of telling that; they depend, as Mr. Walker, I think, or one of the witnesses examined the other day, said, upon the character and integrity of the man who puts out the work.

2824. Did you not find that there was an increase in the number of frames of their own in the hands of middlemen?—Very much so.

2825. And was not that in consequence of the profit they would derive on the work they would receive from the manufacturers by letting out their frames to the workmen?—I should consider so.

2826. Do you not consider that the spreading work over a number of additional frames which the manufacturers never intended should be let out, is a very great evil?—Yes, I do.

2827. Mr. *Ingham.*] Speading work over an additional number of frames is, in other words, employing an additional number of hands?—Yes.

2828. And that may be done by a person feeling himself in the situation described by a witness the other day of being likely to be torn to pieces if he gave full work to some few men instead of giving half work to all?—Yes.

2829. So that it is not at all an act done by the owner of the frames which is displeasing to the bulk of the people he is dealing with?—That again depends upon the extent to which he is going to put out work.

2830. Do you agree with the opinion expressed by one of the witnesses, that if a person were to act as the Chairman suggests, and were to refuse to give work to more frames than the number of frames for which that work was intended, he would be exposed to that importunity and displeasure on the part of the workmen which has been alluded to?—No, I do not agree exactly with that opinion; I have said that I am sure he might be importuned to divide the work in some cases, but I do not think that that is the inducement which operates with them; I think the inducement is the pecuniary interest derived from the rent of the frame.

2831. But would not the effect on the workman be mortification at being refused work, whatever the inducement was to the person who refused him?—It would depend on how he put out the work: if he goes to the houses of the people he delivers out as much as he has to deliver to each, and away he goes; if he calls them together, which I have known done sometimes, they would expect a share each of the work given out.

2832. *Chairman.*] If there were not the facility which at present exists for obtaining frame rent, would not that conduce to a more honourable and a better feeling between the manufacturers, the middlemen, and the workmen?—I think it would; I think the manufacturers would act in a much more friendly way towards the workmen than the middlemen do?—A middleman has to get his own living and his own remuneration between the manufacturer and the workmen, and therefore, to a certain extent, he must pinch the workmen as much as he can.

2833. And

2833. And that is a great deal dependent, is it not, upon the rent he gets out of the frames?—Yes, it is.

2834. Have you seen the printed objections of the hosiers which have been circulated through the hosiery districts?—Yes, I have; I think there is one from Nottingham and one from Leicester; I have them here; I have the objections of the hosiers of Leicestershire and the objections of the hosiers of Nottingham and its neighbourhood.

2835. What is your opinion with regard to those objections?—I thought some of them were not sound, and others hardly fair.

2836. Mr. *Ingham.*] The master hosiers or the operatives?—I have them both here.

2837. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you the one from Nottingham?—I have.

2838. From the master hosiers?—Yes.

2839. Do you dispute the first objection, "That the proposed Bill interferes uselessly with the ordinary mode of settling accounts between persons, who must, from their position as employer and employed, necessarily be contracting parties"?—I differ from that, because I say the employers and the employed are not contracting parties, inasmuch as the manufacturer is not the employer in this case; he goes to a middleman, who is their employer.

2840. You do not dispute the next position, "That it cannot affect the result to the workman, so as to improve his position, inasmuch as he cannot receive more than the value of his labour, according to the supply and demand for the time being;" I think you have admitted that?—I agree that he cannot receive more than the value of his labour, according to the supply and demand for the time being.

2841. They state, in objection No. 4, that "it is absolutely necessary that middlemen should be employed, as there are great numbers now working stocking-frames who are quite incapable of managing and keeping the frame in order, which duty now devolves on the middleman"?—I do not agree in that statement, because I think the sooner those people are shut out of the frames the better; if they cannot keep a frame in which they work in order they must be very bad workmen, and unfit to be trusted with a frame; there may be old people and young children who are unable to put their frames in order.

2842. They go on to say, "By this means the workmen are enabled to reside in the country, and wherever cheap living, low rents, or other attractions make it most convenient to them, and to carry on their work in the midst of their families, who are able, from early age, to render valuable assistance." Do you admit that that is an advantage derived from the existing state of things?—I do not think there is much advantage in it.

2843. Then, fifthly, they point out "That it is an error to suppose that the abolition of frame rent would benefit the workman or increase the real amount of his wages. It would only vary the mode in which the owner would receive an equivalent for the cost of the machine, and of keeping it in repair;" I suppose you admit that, do you not?—I admit that. I do not admit the statement, "that that would necessarily be done by adopting two scales of wages, one for workmen providing their own machines, and another for those whose machines were found by the master," because they do not do that now where a workman provides his own machine; there are not two rates of wages.

2844. Then their last objection is, that any legislation upon this question would be as futile as the Act of 8th & 9th Victoria, cap. 77, "which (they say), from the utterly impracticable nature of its provisions, became a dead letter within a month;" do you admit that that would be the result of any legislation upon the frame-rent question?—No, I do not.

2845. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you know the ground upon which the Act you have just referred to (the Ticket Act) became a dead letter?—I do not know; I have heard several grounds stated.

2846. Was it not from a defect in the construction of the interpretation clause?—I have so understood.

2847. Besides those objections, to which you have been referred, from the hosiers of Nottinghamshire, there were some objections from Leicestershire; are you in possession of a copy of those?—Yes.

2848. They state, "that should this Bill become law, and the real object of its promoters be accomplished, namely, the entire abolition of frame rents, a very

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large amount of capital now invested in frames would be placed in jeopardy"?—I do not see that the Bill would have that effect.

2849. What they mean, I presume, is, that the large amount derived from frame rents would be diminished?—Very likely.

2850. And they proceed to say, "that if frame rents were abolished, the Act of 28 George 3, chapter 55, which imposes penalties upon a framework-knitter renting or taking to hire any stocking-frames, and not delivering the same up after 14 days' notice, and which also makes it an indictable offence for the person so renting a frame to sell or unlawfully dispose thereof, would be rendered wholly inoperative; that owners would have no other remedy for the recovery of their frames than an action at law; and that workmen might withhold or dispose of the frames entrusted to them without subjecting themselves to any penal consequences." Do you agree with that?—It is difficult to say what would be the effect of an Act of Parliament which I have never seen; but I do not see how an Act on this subject need necessarily interfere with the provisions of that Act of Parliament.

2851. Does not that objection appear to you to be entirely futile?—Quite so, because it would be necessarily provided that if a man has a master's frame he must give it up when required to do so; he is obliged, indeed, to do that now.

2852. The next objection is that the Act would be evaded. That objection, I presume, would apply precisely in the same way to the Truck Act?—Perhaps I had better put in the statements which have been made on both sides of the question. I will, with the permission of the Committee, first put in a copy of the Bill, which I have before referred to, and which is intituled, "A Bill to restrain Stoppages from Payment of Wages in the Hosiery Manufacture;" it was brought in in 1854. [*The Witness delivered in the copy of the Bill referred to*]. I will, then, put in the objections of the hosiers of Leicestershire in addition to those of the hosiers of Nottinghamshire to that Bill. I think it is desirable that the Committee should have this also before them. [*The Witness delivered in the Objections referred to*]. The next is the reply to the manufacturers and owners of frames by the framework-knitters of Leicester. This paper gives an epitome of the manufacturers' objections, and the replies of the workmen to them. [*The Witness delivered in the Paper referred to*]. Then there is this paper, which I should wish to lay before the Committee, the Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire workmen's reasons why the Bill should become law, and the objections of manufacturers answered. [*The Witness delivered in the Paper referred to*]. And I will also put in the objections of the hosiers of Nottingham and its neighbourhood. [*The Witness delivered in the Objections referred to*].

Vide Appendix.

Vide Appendix.

Vide Appendix.

Vide Appendix.

Vide Appendix.

2853. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there any further observations that you wish to make with regard to those statements *pro* and *con*?—I think it is essential that the Committee should be put in full information of the views both of the workpeople and of the manufacturers; they will be so now by those papers, because you will find that they have been drawn up with apparent care, and they exhibit both sides of the question. Where the parties are both interested, it is hardly possible but that there will be omissions on both sides, but I think that much of the evidence which has been laid before the Committee will sufficiently explain what would otherwise probably not be so apparent, the differences that exist between the workmen and the employers, as they are called, on this subject; the statements which have been drawn up, are drawn up by the hosiers, who do not, for reasons which I have stated before, come so immediately in contact with those who are absolutely working for them, who are under the middlemen, as probably to be personally acquainted with much that is stated in those papers.

2854. *Chairman.*] Are there not a great many instances in Leicestershire of rents upon machinery not in the houses of the workmen?—Yes; all those frames which are in shops as they are called, are not in the houses of the workmen. There are sometimes a great many frames in the house of one workman where he employs journeymen, not his own children working in them, perhaps two or three young lads; some work with four frames, some with six, and some with three.

2855. Then he would equally pay rent for the frame, whether it was in his own premises, where he would have the peculiar care of it, or whether it was in the shop of the person for whom he was working?—Yes; the only difference is, that in his own house he does not pay 3*d.* a week for standing.

2856. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you recollect that Mr. Biggs stated, in his evidence, that

that he would wish to confine legislation on this subject entirely to the prevention of the exaction of frame rent?—I do not recollect that.

2857. You would differ from him upon that point; you would include stoppages of every description?—I think it would be better to provide that no deductions should be made from wages.

2858. You think it would be better that the workman should have the result of his earnings in the shape of a net payment?—Yes.

2859. And the abolition of all complaint as regards stoppages on the part of the workmen would be, in your opinion, the chief, if not the only result of legislation on the subject?—I think that would be a very important result.

2860. *Chairman.*] I do not know whether you recollect Mr. Biggs' evidence; but was not his evidence to the effect, that he did not wish to legislate beyond frame rent, although, in his opinion, the other charges would follow the abolition of frame rent?—Payment in some shape or other would be necessary for some of the other charges.

2861. But the evils complained of by the workmen, with regard to other charges, would be done away with by the abolition of frame rents?—I think it would be better upon the whole, that expenses attendant upon production should e paid by the manufacturer, and not by the workman.

2862. In question No. 438 he is asked, "Would your short Bill include shop charges, or would it merely apply to frame rents?" and his answer is, "It would, I conceive, be effectual entirely. Shop charges are matters of contract between the workmen and the undertakers. Many of them work at net rates already; some take a penny and some twopence in the shilling; of course the undertakers could not oppress the workmen if rent were annihilated, because you take the machine out of his hands; you take the lever away from him"?—Yes.

2863. In question No. 530 I find he is asked this; "As you advocate the regulation of this overcharge for rent by Act of Parliament, would you not also regulate these complaints as regards stoppages in the same way?" his answer is, "Most certainly not; I would not have Parliament interfere with the details of manufacture between employers and employed in any way;" so that you differ from Mr. Biggs upon that point; he advocates legislation on frame rent only, and you advocate legislation with regard to all charges or deductions?—Yes.

2864. The next question is, "Would it not only be following out the same principle, if the stoppages made by the middlemen were also resolved into a net charge?" The answer is, "It can be carried out with as much facility by the middleman and his workmen as between us and the middlemen"?—Yes; that was his statement.

2865. Mr. *Ingham.*] Have you ever been in those parts of the North of England in which coal mines are worked to any great extent?—No, I have not.

2866. Have you been in districts where there has been mining of any description carried on?—I have never been officially employed with reference to mines.

2867. Is there not in other factories a system of stoppages for oil for greasing the machinery, and so on?—No, I think not, in the manufacturing districts.

2868. What you think the men object to, is the stringent way in which they are made to pay for these articles, by deduction from wages?—It has been so long a source of complaint with them that it must be very deeply felt, I think.

2869. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are well acquainted with the administration of the Poor-law?—I am.

2870. Is it not a rule constantly observed, that if an applicant for parish relief has any work at all, he is not considered a proper object for relief?—There is nothing that has been more strenuously opposed in the administration of the Poor-law, than what is termed relief in aid of wages. If a man earns ever so small a sum in the course of a week, they will give him nothing in addition to it.

2871. If a framework-knitter can get any work at all he is not entitled to any relief from the poor-rate?—He is not.

2872. Then in the case of partial employment, where a small amount of material only is delivered out to him, he might be reduced to great difficulty?—He would be, and constantly is.

2873. So that it is very difficult, without inhumanity, to carry out the principle of the Poor-law under the circumstances of this trade?—It is next to impossible to give him any relief, because he is partially employed.

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2874. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you concur with Mr. Biggs in thinking that it would be better for these parties to be maintained by the parish than to be in only partial employment?—I do not agree with him entirely in that part of his evidence; I do not think they would all be thrown upon the rates at all; I anticipate quite a different result.

2875. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you think that by legislation in the mode proposed, the physical condition of the workman would be improved?—I am satisfied it would.

2876. *Chairman.*] Are they not bound to take the least amount of wages that may be offered to them for fear of losing employment by their frame being taken from them?—They always do take any work that is offered to them; I can hardly say they are absolutely bound to do it, but they invariably do it.

2877. Is that, do you apprehend, in consequence of their fear of losing their frames when trade becomes better?—I would hardly say that; for if there was a demand for their labour they would get employment; in brisk times there always is a demand for their labour, but those times are very fitful, if I may so express it.

2878. Sir *H. Halford.*] But under a correct administration of the Poor-law it would be a condition of relief that the man should give up his frame?—It would.

2879. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Did you find, from your intercourse with the workmen, that they were anxious to go into the poorhouses?—No; I think they would do anything rather than do so; I think there is the greatest possible dislike among the English people to go into the poorhouse; that, I believe, is a universal feeling among the poorer classes.

2880. And you would not advocate any measure that would have a tendency to destroy that feeling?—I should be sorry to advocate any measure that would encourage them to go in.

2881. Lord *J. Manners.*] Your opinion is, that the present system takes advantage of that feeling to put the working people into a poor and miserable condition?—I think it leads to that result.

2882. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is that result contemplated, do you think, by the manufacturer in his operations?—Certainly not by a respectable manufacturer.

Martis, 22° die Maii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Sir Joshua Walmsley.	Lord John Manners.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Packe.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. *Thomas Corah*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *T. Corah.*

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2883. *Chairman.*] I believe you are engaged in the Hosiery Manufacture in Leicester?—I am.

2884. How long have you been in the trade?—For more than 30 years.

2885. Will you inform the Committee how many frames you employ?—I employ more than a thousand of my own, and about the same number of independent frames.

2886. Are your workpeople employed upon the frame-rent system?—Yes; out of the factory they are employed on the frame-rent system.

2887. How many frames are there employed in the factory?—We have no common frames in the factory.

2888. What proportion of your frames are employed out of the factory?—All those I have stated are employed out of the factory.

2889. The

2889. The 2,000?—Yes.

2890. Are they employed in the town of Leicester?—In the town and county; they are scattered almost all over the county.

2891. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do I understand you to say you do not include the frames in the factory?—I do not include them.

2892. *Chairman.*] Do you work them by middlemen?—Part of them, and part of them by a family connexion, as it were; family work.

2893. Do any of them work direct to the warehouse?—Yes, a great number of them.

2894. What proportion?—I cannot tell you.

2895. You do not know what number are employed through the agency of middlemen, and what are not, do you?—I should think pretty nearly half.

2896. Do you find that those whom you employ are pretty well contented with the mode in which you carry on your business?—I have not had a single complaint from any one of them.

2897. Is there any difference in the number of complaints, or in the amount of satisfaction given to the workmen, between those who work to middlemen, and those who work direct to the warehouse?—None whatever. The fact is, that in the wide frames they always get the most money: they do not get so much at the narrow frames, because that is a family trade, and those frames are worked in their own houses, or in small shops attached to their houses.

2898. What proportion of the 2,000 frames you employ are narrow frames?—The greater part of them are narrow frames; I should think 1,900 at least, or more than that.

2899. Are you at all aware whether your middlemen charge to those who work for them a price different from that which is sanctioned by your warehouse?—They have a regular charge that they always make to the hands. I cannot say exactly what their charge is, because I have never inquired. I understand they are to come here to be examined.

2900. You do not know of your own knowledge whether there is or is not any regularity in their charges?—I think there is regularity in the charge they make; of course each middleman adopts his own course; but generally speaking, they do it at a very small per centage, less than would pay the workman to bring his work in to the warehouse direct.

2901. Do you ever give out short work and take full rent?—That we never do; I do not understand short work; I give my hands plenty of work; I know there have been statements made to the Committee to that effect; all sorts of statements in fact have been made.

2902. It has never been your custom at all to do so?—No, it has never been my custom; I thoroughly hate that system.

2903. If a workman is disabled in consequence of sickness or otherwise from working, is a deduction made from his wages for the rent of his frame?—We do not take the rent.

2904. What is the rent charged per week for the narrow frames?—I have bought frames from about 4*l.* to 8*l.* and 9*l.*, and I take 1*s.* a week rent; but the frames I buy at 4*l.* are partly worn down; in the course of a year or two they will either want new insides or recruiting.

2905. Are the greater portion of your frames at work at this moment?—There are several out of work; the sock hands are the principal ones; a good many of them are out of work, because they have been sadly overdone.

2906. Lord *J. Manners.*] They have been overdone, have they?—Yes; that is, there have been too many made for the demand.

2907. Will you explain why too many have been made for the demand?—On account of the amazing supply.

2908. Mr. *Gardner.*] And the smallness of the demand?—And the smallness of the demand, of course.

2909. *Chairman.*] Is there any check against a middleman making a different agreement with the framework-knitters for the execution of the work given out to them than that which you agree to in the warehouse?—No, none whatever; we merely weigh out the material to him and tell him to make a certain quantity at such and such prices.

2910. You supply the frames at a certain rent?—At a certain rent generally; but we have not many wide frames now. We have employed a good many wide frames, but we have stopped one of the shops that used to make us

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several hundred dozens a week, entirely, because the wide frames are superseded now by the circular frames.

2911. Supposing a middleman has a number of frames of his own besides those which he receives from you, has he the power of spreading your work over that additional number of frames?—It is impossible for me to say; we have only to do with the middlemen, and not with those beyond.

2912. Lord *J. Manners.*] The Chairman asked you whether he had the power to do so, not whether it was his custom to do it?—I dare say he has the power to do so if he likes.

2913. His exercising that power would depend a great deal upon the state of trade, would it not?—Yes.

2914. *Chairman.*] He has the power of stinting the work unknown to you, and of taking the full rent of the frame for which he is answerable to you?—But that middleman may work to a dozen warehouses, and may get work from every one of them at all seasons.

2915. Mr. *Gardner.*] What you mean to say is, that the hosier does not exercise any immediate control over him?—We cannot exercise any control over the middleman; we merely weigh out his yarn, and he does as he likes with it; if he makes the goods to suit us, that is all that is necessary to be done.

2916. *Chairman.*] Then the middleman has it in his power, if he chooses, to extort money improperly from the workman unknown to the hosier?—I do not think he can do that, because the class of men he has to deal with will take care they do not make them lower than the usual price in the trade.

2917. Then there is that check?—That is a great check, and the only check; there is not a more independent class of men than they are anywhere in existence.

2918. Is there not a difference between the amount of intelligence and knowledge possessed by the operatives in the town of Leicester and by those in the villages?—Not that I know of.

2919. Are the people who are working in the villages as well able to discover any extortion that may be practised upon them as those working in Leicester?—There is only one regular system; the prices are known all over the country, and if you were to attempt to get work done at 3*d.* a dozen less you could not do it.

2920. The deductions are not uniformly the same in every district, are they?—For the same class of goods, generally they are.

2921. Have any of the men you employ frames of their own?—Yes, several of them. You will bear in mind, that of the 2,000 frames I employ, 1,000 are independent of me entirely; I do not take them at 6*d.* a week, nor yet at 9*d.* I do not adopt the poundage system, nor do I get a single farthing from them in any shape, and I cannot get my goods made lower than the price I am giving to my own hands.

2922. Do you not rent them?—No; I receive no interest, in any shape whatever, from them.

2923. Then how do these independent frames come into your hands?—If you will allow me, I will just read one or two notes I have received from some of my hands; they are highly respectable men, and their words may be taken; one is from Mr. Turner, of Sharnford, near Hinckley; he says, "Sir,—You request me to send you a statement of the earnings of the wrought-hose hands you employ through me; I send you a few quotations from my work-book of last week's work. I send you four classes of hands, as it will appear more plain with the rent and carriage taken off, as it simply stands in my book. I work to you 100 narrow frames; these hands are as follows: 32 men hands, 22 stocking-makers' children, 30 agricultural labourers' children, 16 agricultural labourers' wives. Men hands with their wives: James Gasson, two frames, himself and wife, 9th May, two dozen six pair, at 4*s.* 6*d.*, 11*s.* 3*d.*; two dozen pair, at 3*s.* 6*d.*, making together 18*s.* 3*d.*; now he charges for taking the work out and bringing it in one halfpenny in the shilling, or 10*d.* in the pound; and another thing to be observed is, that he does not charge 1*s.* rent; he charges only 10*d.*"

2924. Mr. *Gardner.*] Does that 18*s.* 3*d.* represent the gross wages?—That 18*s.* 3*d.* represents the gross wages.

2925. Mr. *Biggs.*] For man and wife?—Man and wife; there is 2*s.* 5*d.* off.

2926. Mr.

2926. Mr. *Gardner.*] What are the total deductions?—Two shillings and five pence.

2927. Off 18*s.* 3*d.*?—Yes; that leaves 15*s.* 10*d.* remaining.

2928. Mr. *Biggs.*] Net wages?—Net wages; then there is James Hincks, of Sapcote, two dozens and four pairs, at 4*s.* 6*d.*; one dozen and three pairs, at 4*s.* 9*d.*; making together 16*s.* 5¼*d.* The carriage in that case would be 8*d.*, and one week's rent 1*s.* 8*d.*, leaving 14*s.* 1¼*d.*

2929. Mr. *Gardner.*] Net wages?—Net wages; then there is William Clarke and wife, four dozens and two pairs, at 3*s.* 6*d.*; one dozen and four pairs, at 3*s.* 6*d.*; the workman earned himself, in this case, 14*s.* 7*d.*, and the wife 4*s.* 8*d.*, making together 19*s.* 3*d.*

2930. Gross wages?—Yes; and the carriage in this case is 9½*d.*, and one week's rent 1*s.* 8*d.*; that is for two frames, making together 2*s.* 5¼*d.* deduction, leaving 16*s.* 9½*d.* Then there is Joseph Clarke one frame; three dozen, at 4*s.* 6*d.*, 13*s.* 6*d.*; carriage 6½*d.*, and rent 10*d.*

2931. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are there any other charges beyond those?—No; those are the net wages. He gets them seamed, and the stuff wound at home.

2932. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is the total deduction in that case?—One shilling and four pence halfpenny.

2933. Leaving how much?—Leaving 12*s.* 1¼d.

2934. Mr. *Ingham.*] Who does the seaming?—His family; this is family work altogether.

2935. So that this is not for himself and his wife, but for himself, his wife, and some other members of his family?—Yes. Here is Joseph Moore, who has four frames employed by himself and three children; 10 dozens and one pair, at 3*s.* 6*d.*, leaving 1*l.* 15*s.* 3½*d.*; the carriage would be 1*s.* 5½*d.*, leaving 1*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.* net. Mr. Turner told me the other day, that one of his hands had recently sold 30 lbs. weight of his yarn, and had gone to Australia.

2936. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you know the ages of the children?—No, I do not.

2937. Mr. *Gardner.*] To what place does this refer?—Sharnford. Then Thomas Arnold, five frames, himself, two children, and two agricultural labourers' children; that is, four children and one man. This is a true statement; and it will bear investigation.

2938. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are those constant earnings?—Yes; you will find that hands are more regular, generally speaking, in the country than they are in towns; there is not the same inducement to take them away from their work that you find in the large towns; every week would be alike, with the exception of feast weeks.

2939. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is what you have given us a fair average of wages from year's end to year's end?—It is a fair average.

2940. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is supposing they have full employment?—They always have full employment with me. I may say, that I never took a single farthing poundage in any shape, and I never intend to; I thoroughly hate the system.

2941. This which you have been speaking of is in the wrought-hose branch?—Yes; which is the worst paid branch of all; this kind of hose, three months ago, was 3 *d.* a dozen more; but they are out of season now; there being no demand for them.

2942. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is this computation of yours on the reduced scale of wages?—Yes. Then I take Thomas Arnold, five frames, two children, and two agricultural labourers' children, four children and a man, eight dozen and one pair, at 3*s.* 6 *d.*, and three dozen and four pair, at 4*s.* 3 *d.*

2943. What are their gross earnings?—£. 2. 2. 5½.; carriage, 1*s.* 9 *d.*, and rent of five frames, at 10 *d.*, 4*s.* 2 *d.*

2944. Leaving how much net wages?—£. 1. 16. 6½. The next is Anne Smith, agricultural labourer's daughter; two dozens and five pairs, at 3 *s.* 6 *d.*; that would be 8 *s.* 5½ *d.*; carriage, 4 *d.*, and rent, 10 *d.*; leaving 7 *s.* 3½*d.*

2945. Are these average hands as to skill?—They are average hands as to skill and everything else. This man will have good work made, and he will not have it slighted; these hands, except the children of agricultural labourers, have the frames at their own homes. This person says, "You will see that I charge 2 *d.* per frame less rent than you do at Leicester; I consider that I am quite as forward at 10 *d.* as you are at 1 *s.*; they are more under my own eye

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than yours can be, and I know more of hands, whether they will take care of a frame or destroy it;" so that he considers himself better paid at 10 *d.* than we are at 1 *s.*

2946. Because the frames are under his own hands?—And he looks after them; they are upon the spot. Now, I have another case; this is in the neighbourhood of Hinckley, at Stoke Golding: "Respecting the quantity of frames I employ for you, they number 106, 40 of which are worked by men, 26 by women, and 30 by children, five by labourers' wives, and three by their children."

2947. *Chairman.*] The paper you hold in your hand comes from a middleman, does it not?—I should consider him an undertaker.

2948. Is not a middleman and an undertaker the same thing?—No; these parties have frames of their own; middlemen generally employ the hosier's frames.

2949. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Many middlemen have frames of their own, have they not?—Yes; and so have many of the workmen.

2950. *Chairman.*] What is the difference between a middleman and an undertaker?—You may call them undertakers or middlemen; only these parties have frames of their own; they are highly respectable men.

2951. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Many middlemen are highly respectable, are they not?—Yes; he mentions the case of one named Bonsor, who, he says, with his wife and two daughters, last week earned 1 *l.* 14 *s.* 10 ½ *d.*, from which I deducted 4 *s.* for rent;" he charges a shilling rent, but charges nothing for bringing their work in and taking it out. This is a little different system to the other; he charges them a shilling only; the other charges a halfpenny in a shilling.

2952. These are independent frames?—Yes; they have nothing to do with my own.

2953. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you speak of a man and his family, consisting of so many children, do you mean that each child has a separate frame?—Yes; but the children are not very young; perhaps they may be 12, 13, 14, 15, or 16 years of age. He says, "Therefore his earnings amount to 1 *l.* 10 *s.* 10 ½ *d.* I paid Mary Munton 6 *s.* 1 ½ *d.*, after deducting 1 *s.* rent." That is another hand. Then he says, "I charge them nothing for carriage, being all my own frames, and they receive the same price for the goods you pay me. I consider the evil attending stocking-making much greater by allowing them to take the work home, than taking 1 *s.* rent, provided they worked in a body, with a looker-over, to see the same quantity of work done on Monday as is done on Friday."

2954. Mr. *Gardner.*] Does he mean to say that the practice of working frames in their own houses tends to encourage idleness?—So it appears; he is alluding to Saint Monday.

2955. Sir *H. Halford.*] Just read the last part of what he says again?—"I consider the evil attending stocking-making much greater by allowing them to take the work home, than taking 1 *s.* rent, provided they worked in a body, with a looker-over, to see the same quantity of work done on Monday as is done on Friday;" he means they would do considerably more than the shilling rent would come to if they would work regularly on the Monday.

2956. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do not the workmen pay the shilling a week rent, whether the frames are in their own houses or in a factory?—They are never put in factories.

2957. But in places where there are several together?—They are in small shops, or in their own houses.

2598. Sir *H. Halford.*] I do not exactly see the distinction; will you explain it, if you please?—If they would work on the Monday, they would be better by the shilling rent; that is what is meant.

2959. That is to say, if they worked in a shop where they would be subject to discipline, they would be better off than if working in their own houses?—Yes; if they were subject to discipline, and there were a looker-over, they would save the shilling by working on the Monday.

2960. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] They would be forced to work on the Monday?—Yes; and they will not now, "as is done on Friday;" they work very hard on Friday, and I dare say they work very often all night.

2961. Lord *J. Manners.*] If I understand it correctly, the writer of the letter is in favour of what is called the factory system?—No; he does not mean that; but

but if they would work regularly on the Monday, they would be better off than they are now by more than the shilling rent.

2962. Does he think they will not do so much work if they work in their own houses?—He thinks they would be better off if they were more under discipline.

2963. Does he not indicate an opinion, that discipline can only be obtained in a factory?—You could not put narrow frames in a factory; you could not work them there to any advantage.

2964. Mr. *Gardner.*] Or in large shops?—No; you cannot work them to advantage there; besides the father, perhaps the wife and children will do something. He says, "Their earnings in most cases would be considerably more."

2965. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have spoken of the middlemen receiving 1*s.* instead of 10*d.*, and doing the work; that is, I suppose, the carrying the work in and delivering it out?—In Mr. Turner's case, it is 10*d.* and carriage; it is 10*d.* rent, and carriage in addition; a halfpenny in the shilling; a dozen hose would be 1½*d.* carriage; it is worth that; the man keeps a large van, and lives, perhaps, 11 or 12 miles away.

2966. In other cases you have stated 1*s.* is received, and he charges nothing for taking in or giving out?—That is what he states there, and I can believe the man.

2967. Are there many cases of that description that have come actually within your own knowledge?—I do not know; I know that these cases are cases that have come before me; I have never made inquiry, because I really have not thought it worth while to do so; I knew that at any time I could always defend my own case before any Committee.

2968. You made no inquiry then as to the conduct of the middlemen, or as to their charges?—Those middlemen, I can assure you, are above suspicion.

2969. I am not questioning whether the middlemen are or are not above suspicion; but what I wish to ask you is, whether you yourself have made any inquiry of the workmen, with a view to ascertain whether these statements are correct or not?—There is this to be said, that if the middlemen did not use the workmen in a proper manner they would not work to them.

2970. You have not given an answer to my question; I ask you whether you have made yourself acquainted with the facts you have stated from your own personal observation, or from any actual conversation you have had with the men themselves, or whether you make these statements simply on the authority of the letters you have produced to the Committee?—If there had been any gross cases I am quite sure I should have heard of them.

2971. Mr. *Ingham.*] But you have not yet given an answer to the question which has been put to you?—I have had some of those hands working to me direct.

2972. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I will ask you again, whether you have made yourself personally acquainted with the practices between the workmen and the middlemen, or whether you merely speak from information which you have received from the middlemen themselves?—In some cases I have made inquiry.

2973. In how many cases have you made inquiry?—It is quite impossible for me to say. I have made inquiry in the course of my time, but I cannot say in how many cases.

2974. Will you confine yourself, if you please, to those particular cases to which you have referred; do you speak of your own knowledge, or do you merely put in those letters to prove the case?—I speak from my own knowledge. I have seen several of the hands, but not very lately, and they have been well treated by these parties.

2975. The letters which you have produced have reference to what has occurred within a few weeks; do you speak of your own knowledge to within a few weeks?—I speak of my own knowledge to within a few years, as cases have arisen; some occurred perhaps a short time ago, and others at an earlier period.

2976. Without in any way wishing to throw discredit upon those papers, which I do not most certainly intend to do, for I believe them very likely to be correct, I ask you whether you are able to say of your own knowledge that they are so or not?—They are so.

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2977. How do you know that?—Because I have seen some of the parties occasionally.

2978. Do you mean years ago?—Very recently.

2979. Let me ask you again, have those cases reference to a period within two or three weeks?—Yes; I have not seen any of them since that time.

2980. Lord *J. Manners.*] Are you aware whether any of these statements are certified by the people to whom they refer?—He copied these cases out of his book the last time of the work coming in; that is, when they brought the work in the last time he put down these cases; of course he has taken them out of his book; in one case the work was brought in on May the 9th, and another on the 11th, two on the 12th; there are more I see; there is one on the 8th, and another on the 11th, and another on the 12th.

2981. Have they been shown to and approved by the workpeople themselves?—No; there would be no necessity for that, because he lives upon the spot.

2982. I wanted to know whether these statements come before us on the authority of the undertakers themselves alone, or whether they are backed by the authority of the workpeople?—They are not backed by their authority; but I have not the least doubt that every one of these cases could be substantiated.

2983. Mr. *Gardner.*] And I suppose you, if necessary, would be prepared to produce those witnesses before the Committee?—Of course.

2984. And you think they would substantiate the cases to which you have referred?—Yes, I am sure they would.

2985. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have spoken of the middlemen as being above suspicion; that applies, I presume, only to the two men with whom you are connected?—Yes; of course I cannot speak to every middleman; that would be impossible.

2986. Mr. *Gardner.*] I do not suppose you think that in any business all the persons who carry it on are quite above suspicion, do you?—No, they are not.

2987. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] There was a paper put in especially on this subject, in reply to Question No. 1782, which I have no doubt you have seen; it has reference to hands working through a Mr. Handford to Mr. Corah; can you give the Committee any information upon that subject?—I will go into that case directly, but, if the Committee will allow me to say that, I think there is another case that should be gone into first; this is the case of a man who has a large shop and the whole of the frames are ours; they are wide sham-knit frames; on March the 8th that man brought work in to the amount of 193 *l.* 8 *s.*

2988. Mr. *Biggs.*] What is the man's name?—Samuel Hackitt.

2989. *Chairman.*] Where does he live?—In Leicester; in Northampton-street, I think.

2990. Mr. *Biggs.*] Over what length of time did that extend?—Nine weeks.

2991. *Chairman.*] £. 193. 8. sterling?—Yes; the rent is 21 *l.* 1 *s.*; winding for the time, doing up the work, laying it straight, taking it in, &c., 7 *l.* 17 *s.* 6 *d.* Then there is the standing of the frames (he has a large shop), 10 *l.* 15 *s.*

2992. Will you state the total deductions?—£. 39. 13. 6.

2993. Mr. *Gardner.*] Leaving net how much?—£. 153. 14. 6.; that is, net to the hands.

2994. How many hands were employed in that work?—I cannot tell.

2995. Mr. *Biggs.*] What is that intended to prove?—It is intended to prove this: he says the average wages, when everything is taken off, is from 14 *s.* to 15 *s.* a week.

2996. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But he does not say the number of hands employed?—No; and I cannot speak positively as to that.

2997. Mr. *Gardner.*] He wants to show the average of deductions?—Yes, because a statement has been put forth that half went for expenses. Now, when Mr. Collins was in my counting-house a fortnight ago, he stated that when he adopted the net system, he reduced his workmen exactly one-half; that is what he told me; so it goes to prove that we have not quite reduced them one-half; but it is 39 *l.* 13 *s.* 6 *d.* off 193 *l.* 8 *s.*, leaving the net sum for them to divide amongst themselves, 153 *l.* 14 *s.* 6 *d.*

2998. Mr. *Biggs.*] Leaving 14 *s.* or 15 *s.* a week to each hand?—To each hand.

2999. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Is that a shop in Leicester?—Yes; a factory you may term it; it is a sort of factory, or large shop; the machinery is all our own; it is the wide sham knit machinery.

3000. *Chairman.*] You have mentioned the name of Samuel Hackitt, of Leicester; have you any similar case that you can mention with regard to work in the village?—No, they would not answer in the village.

3001. Why not?—I never could do any good in the village myself with that kind of machinery; I could always find the best hands in Leicester; they have been more accustomed to it in Leicester than in the villages.

3002. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] The statement you have put in would go to prove that they can earn better wages in a large shop or in a factory than they can in the ordinary way?—Yes; wide-frame work; they can get more out of wide frames than they can by the common wrought-hose frames, which any child can work at.

3003. And you also think, do you not, that they would be kept more closely to their employment and be able to earn more in a factory than they could at the domestic frame?—In our factory they are obliged to keep regular hours or else they are fined.

3004. And therefore I understand you to say you think it better that the men should be kept at regular hours, and be employed in factories?—You cannot bring the present narrow frames into factories, for they will never pay; you must always place them where they will pay the best.

3005. But you think that with steady employment the narrow frames would be better by being in large shops, supposing they could be introduced?—No.

3006. You think not?—No; I spoke of wide frames; it is impossible to bring the narrow frames into large shops; I mean the common wrought stocking frame.

3007. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is on account of the space they occupy, I presume?—They would occupy a good deal of space, and you would have no end of trouble with them; besides, your labour is much better done at home. I always like to employ a man who works with his family before any shops, because you can get your work done better.

3008. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Then, in your opinion, the work is better made by means of domestic manufacturers than it is in a small shop where there are perhaps half a dozen frames together?—That is a domestic manufacture to all intents and purposes, because there are many houses that will hold half a dozen frames.

3009. Is it not customary in the villages situate about Leicester to have small shops built for the purpose of putting half a dozen frames in?—They have more than that generally; but they are connected with the houses; some of the shops near Leicester are larger than others; in the village of Wigston, for instance, they have larger places; the larger the villages the larger shops you find.

3010. I want to ascertain from you whether the hands could not be more usefully and profitably employed in those shops than they would be keeping Saint Monday, and Saint Tuesday too, as it is said they do occasionally?—The fact is, that generally speaking they keep Saint Monday; I may say that they do so always, both those who work in the large shops and those who work in their own houses.

3011. Why do they do so?—I do not know; I suppose it is custom as much as anything.

3012. Is it because they have not always employment?—There is always plenty of employment; they generally have sufficient material in hand for them to begin working on Monday morning.

3013. You do not mean to say that all frames have plenty of employment?—No, but ours have.

3014. Sir *H. Halford.*] That arises, I suppose, from some peculiar advantage connected with your employment?—I cannot say that.

3015. Mr. *Gardner.*] But your hands, although they have plenty of employment, do keep Saint Monday?—Yes.

3016. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does not their being employed in a steam factory ensure a more regular attendance?—Yes; in a steam factory we should not allow an hour, or even half an hour's absence.

3017. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to say that the wages on the wide frames

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frames are higher than on the narrow, mainly because children cannot work on them, whereas they can work on narrow frames?—Yes; they cannot work the wide frames; they must be men to do it, and generally speaking good hands; a slow hand would be of no use on a wide frame; so that we get below the average hands when we get to the wrought hose in large towns; the best hands will find out the best work.

3018. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But still you think it advisable, where it is practicable, to have a number of narrow frames together in a shop, rather than to have separate frames in the workmen's houses?—The fact is, that that system cannot be carried out with the present machinery.

3019. But still you think it would be desirable that it should be carried out if possible, do you not?—It is of no use talking of a thing that cannot be accomplished, and I am sure that that cannot be accomplished to any advantage.

3020. But you told us a few moments ago, did you not, that it is accomplished, and that there are many frames together in small shops?—Yes; but that is not a factory.

3021. I was not speaking of a factory, but of shops?—You see they are generally worked in the workmen's own houses; the narrow frames are all worked by the workman and his family; and they can work them better and cheaper at home than if they were in a factory. The majority of them are worked in their own houses.

3022. Having stated that many of them are worked in large or moderate sized shops, where they have more than half-a-dozen frames together, I want to know whether that is not a better mode of conducting the business than working a single frame in a house?—No; they do it much cheaper at home, and they have no rent to pay.

3023. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it not the fact that where there may be perhaps six frames in a shop, they are nevertheless worked by one or two families?—It is a family concern to all intents and purposes.

3024. And the wide-frame business is not a family trade?—No.

3025. It is the factory system wanting the steam engine, in fact?—Yes.

3026. Sir *H. Halford.*] Can you tell us what is about the selling value of a narrow frame?—That, of course, depends upon the quality of it; you may get narrow frames at all prices; some machinery is good for nothing; some of the old machinery I would not have for a gift. I will tell you the value I am giving for frames; I have taken the prices out of my own frame-book; any gentleman on this Committee may have a sight of my book if he thinks proper, either in my own counting-house or in this committee-room; I produce nothing but what I can substantiate; there are four frames, and the cost of these frames is 8 *l.*

3027. The original cost of the building?—Yes; I have not had them long; they cost 8 *l.* each.

3028. How many frames are you speaking of?—There are four frames, and I take 1 *s.* a week rent for them; another cost 13 *l.* 10 *s.*

3029. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Would it not be desirable to quote the narrow and the wide frames separately?—I have here two more that cost me 9 *l.* each.

3030. *Chairman.*] The frame of 13 *l.* 10 *s.* is not a narrow frame, I suppose?—No, it is a little wider.

3031. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have spoken of four frames having cost 8 *l.*; what kind of frames do you refer to?—They are wrought rib frames, narrow frames.

3032. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What is the gauge?—Seventeen.

3033. You have four frames that cost 8 *l.*?—Those are frames with new insides; not new frames.

3034. Mr. *Gardner.*] They may have been built 30 years ago, may they not?—Yes; or they may have been built 50 years ago.

3035. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] We will, if you please, confine ourselves to the four frames you have spoken of, which you say cost you 8 *l.* with new insides; that is so, is it not?—Yes.

3036. Did you buy those frames with new insides complete, or did you buy them and then get them repaired?—They were with new insides complete.

3037. Did you buy them from a framesmith?—Yes, from a framesmith.

3038. At 8 *l.*?—Yes; and I can give you the name of the framesmith, if you please, of whom I bought them. Then there are two more frames that cost me 9 *l.*

9 *l.* each: that is the same description of machinery, but better. Then there were four other frames, that cost me 7 *l.* each, plain, and new insides.

3039. Mr. *Biggs.*] What is the rent?—A shilling. Then there are three frames that cost me 17 *l.* each.

3040. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] These are wide frames?—Double frames. I have mentioned all the single frames.

3041. It appears, then, that there are four frames which cost you 8 *l.*, two which cost you 9 *l.*, and four which cost you 7 *l.*, with new insides?—That is correct.

3042. Those are all narrow frames?—Yes.

3043. Are those a recent purchase?—It is within the last 12 months.

3044. You have bought more than that within the last 12 months, I presume?—I cannot tell how many I have bought; I did not look at the frame-book; we merely selected these particular frames.

3045. Is that the average of the cost of your frames?—Yes, good frames; if you are to have good work you must have good machinery; I defy any man to have bad machinery and good work.

3046. You say you have 1,000 frames of your own?—I have more than 1,000.

3047. How many frames have you?—I cannot tell you exactly.

3048. And you have 1,000 independent frames, have you not?—Yes.

3049. I want to know what is the average value of your 1,000 frames, or the price they cost you?—That is a question I cannot answer.

3050. Have you bought any other frames of late at a lower value than 7 *l.*?—No; as I told you before, I am resolved to have the best machinery.

3051. Have you bought any frames at less than 7 *l.*?—Not lately.

3052. At any time?—Of course I have. It is like everything else, you can buy frames at any price; but then a great many of them are good for nothing.

3053. When did you buy frames at less than 7 *l.*?—It is impossible for me to say, but it has not been within the last 12 months.

3054. You have only bought these few frames within the last 12 months?—For a particular kind of work.

3055. These are all you have bought?—I bought more than these at the same price; but I thought these would be a guide.

3056. Have you bought any at less than 7 *l.*?—No, not within the last twelve months.

3057. Nor within the last two years?—I cannot say that; I do not know anything about it.

3058. Do you know whether there have been any sales of frames at less than 7 *l.*?—I do not know; I have not attended any sales lately.

3059. For what sum could you at this moment buy, from a framesmith, a frame with a new inside to it?—I could buy a first-rate frame for 7 *l.* 10 *s.*

3060. And not less?—Not less.

3061. What would that frame cost you for keeping it in repair?—I have made a calculation of five frames during the period of 15 years, with the amounts of frame rent. In the first instance these frames cost me 37 *l.* 10 *s.*

3062. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are speaking of narrow frames?—Yes; this is the first, second, and third year; I maintain that frames will want recruiting every third year. I have several at the shop now that have not gone more than two years, and I am very vexed about it; they now want recruiting.

3063. Have you had many that have gone for a considerable number of years?—Not many; the expenses in the period between the first and the end of the third year, for such things as new screws, sinkers, jobs, and repairs, would be about a sovereign.

3064. At the end of the third year?—No; there are always breakages going on; between the commencement and the end of the third year.

3065. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you mean a sovereign for all the frames?—Yes; then I go to the fourth, fifth, and sixth years; in the fourth year these frames are moulded; moulding and sinkers, &c., I put at 3 *l.* 5 *s.* a frame, making 16 *l.* 5 *s.* I believe Mr. Biggs said 4 *l.* 10 *s.* was the average cost of recruiting a frame; but that would be wrong, of course; I reckon it would be 3 *l.* 5 *s.* I have a list, which was copied from the printed list published by the framesmiths some 12 months ago.

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3066. The frames would then go for three years without repairs?—No; the other expenses afterwards would be 3 *l.* 15 *s.*, such as new sinkers, moulding, cleaning, and other matters that are always springing up. You will bear in mind that we like to keep our machinery in first-rate condition, so that it will make any kind of work.

3067. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to say, that in the fourth year the moulding, and so on, would be 16 *l.* 5 *s.* for the five frames?—Yes.

3068. What are the other expenses?—Other expenses, such as sinkers, main-springs, screws, repairs, jobs, and so on, would be 3 *l.* 15 *s.*

3069. Mr. *Cheetham.*] £. 3. 15. each?—No, altogether; then, in the seventh, eighth, and ninth years, there comes the moulding again.

3070. Mr. *Gardner.*] In what year does the second moulding take place?—The moulding commences in the seventh; then the other expenses would be the same as before, 3 *l.* 15 *s.*

3071. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Then it is 16 *l.* 5 *s.* again, and 3 *l.* 15 *s.*?—Yes, that is right; and the same again in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth years; the same again, precisely, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth. Now, I reckon that each frame will be still one year out of the 15.

3072. *Chairman.*] By still, you mean not in work?—Not in work.

3073. Mr. *Gardner.*] What would you put that at?—£. 12. 10.

3074. Lord *J. Manners.*] Have you given us all the expenses?—Those are the expenses in the 15 years.

3075. The original cost and the expenses?—Yes.

3076. Have you added it up?—I have reckoned the balance; then I go on, on the other side, to state the receipts.

3077. Mr. *Gardner.*] In what comparative condition do these frames stand at the end of the 15 years?—They are worth 35 *s.* each.

3078. Have you taken any account of the difference between the 35 *s.* value at that time and the 7 *l.* 10 *s.* costs?—Yes; I have put down the value in the receipts on the other side.

3079. Lord *J. Manners.*] The last item you gave was in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth years?—That is the end; after that time you go over the same process again.

3080. In that answer, did you mean to say that some of the frames are repaired in the fifteenth year?—No; the repairs occur during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth years; there are continual repairs wanting; we have a host of repairs every week.

3081. If these frames are repaired in the fifteenth year, are they only worth 35 *s.* at the end of the fifteenth year?—They are only worth 35 *s.* at the end of the fifteenth year, because they are worn down; they require a new inside again, and then with a new inside they will go another 15 years, with four moulds to a frame.

3082. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the cost of that new moulding at the end of the 15 years?—I have not put anything down for that, because they want new insides again then.

3083. Mr. *Ingham.*] At the end of the 15 years, they would be worth about 35 *s.* each; some would be worth a little more, I suppose, and some a little less?—Yes. Now I will take the rent side. The first year I received 12 *l.* 10 *s.*, that is, for 50 weeks; two weeks we always give out of the 52. The second year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the third year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the fourth year, 11 *l.* 5 *s.*; it has been at the shop five weeks moulding; the fifth year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the sixth year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the seventh year, 11 *l.* 5 *s.*; it has been at the shop moulding for seven weeks; the eighth year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the ninth year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the tenth year, 11 *l.* 5 *s.*; it has been at the shop moulding seven weeks; the eleventh year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the twelfth year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the thirteenth year, 11 *l.* 5 *s.*; it has been at the shop moulding five weeks; the fourteenth year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; the fifteenth year, 12 *l.* 10 *s.*; and the value of the old carcase at the end of the fifteenth year is 35 *s.*; therefore the value of the five frames at the end of that time is 8 *l.* 15 *s.*

3084. *Chairman.*] At 35 *s.* a frame?—Yes.

3085. Lord *J. Manners.*] How much does all that come to?—£. 191 5 *s.*; if you put 60 *l.* 5 *s.* on the other side, you will make it come to the same thing. Mr. Walker stated last Tuesday, that frames would go about three years and a half, which is longer than they really will go. I will just say here, that it would leave

ave a profit to the manufacturer of 60 *l.* 5 *s.*; that is the profit to the manufacrer on five frames during 15 years, being 4 *l.* per frame for that time, or 6 *s.* per annum; that is 10 per cent. on the capital invested.

3086. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you mean 16 *s.* a year clear profit for the frames?—es; 16 *s.* for each frame.

3087. And that you mean to say is all the profit made from them?—That is l; many frames require moulding at the expiration of two years, and some ven in less time than that; we have now frames in the hands of one frame-nith that have only gone two years, and that are now being moulded; if a ame has been still for a few months it requires cleaning previous to its being t to work again, at an expense of from 10 *s.* to 20 *s.*

3088. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And this calculation assumes that the frame has been mployed the whole time?—No, one year; in 15 years' time I assume that those ames shall be still one year.

3089. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Is that calculation made from any actual knowledge f your own?—Yes; we had nothing to do with any other person in the natter.

3090. You do not take it from any framesmith?—No; we take it from our wn books.

3091. Is it the average of a number of frames?—It is the average hroughout.

3092. The average of your 1,000 frames?—Yes.

3093. For 15 years?—Yes, for 15 years; then I have a note from John Vard, a framesmith at Blaby, a person that we employ, who says, "In reply to ours of this morning, frames upon an average will not go longer than three ears without moulding." Here is another from Thomas Bassett, a frame-mith in Leicester; he says, "I hereby certify that machinery for making tockings, shirts, and socks will on an average continue in working order nearly hree years, after which time they will require thoroughly repairing." Then his is from Mr. Newby, the first framesmith we have in Leicester, who is lmost always employed to value stocking machinery; he says, "A frame with a ew inside will not mould more than four times before it requires again a new nside; frames will not on an average go more than three years after having a ew inside before they require moulding, and the same time between each nould; they also frequently require new sinkers in two years, and occasionally n less time; if they go a longer period, it is because the work is of a different lescription to that usually produced, being of a lighter kind, or that the hand s more careful in the management of the frame."

3094. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you agree with Mr. Newby in opinion, that the carefulness of the hand has a good deal to say to the frequency of repairs, or *vice versâ*?—There are a few careful hands who will make frames go very much longer than others will. I have had one single case during my lifetime, and only one, in which a frame has gone a very long time; that is out of all our lot; and that frame has been worked by a woman, footing, perhaps, a dozen or a dozen and a half pairs a week.

3095. Do you think that the hands are more careful now with frames than they used to be?—Not so careful; a person who is now dead, and who was more than 70 years of age, Mr. Cleaver, who was well known in Leicester, told me, a little more than 12 months ago, that he had known the trade for 60 years; 60 years ago he worked in a shop; he was put to the business, I suppose, very young; he must have been, of course; he said that at that time they had 12 frames in the shop; they were making fine hose; they produced ten dozen a week, the rent being 9 *d.* "And now (he said) I have 12 frames in my shop, the production of those frames is 40 dozens, and I pay 1 *s.* rent." This proves that they paid better when rents were at 9 *d.* than they do now when they are at 1 *s.*

3096. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] How would you account, then, for the evidence which has been given before this Committee, to the effect that many frames worked by men in constant employment go six, seven, eight, nine, and ten years without repairs?—I do not know; I have never found that to be the case.

3097. Lord *J. Manners.*] Can you give any reason why people are more careless of their frames now than they were formerly?—Yes; this will account for it: many years ago fine work was made in the wrought frames generally;

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there was nothing less than twenties and twenty-ones at that time; now they are sham-knits; they can produce a large quantity of hose from each frame; these are narrow frames; but some hands can make four, some five, and some six dozens in these frames.

3098. How does that make people less careful of frames than they used to be?—There is more wear and tear now.

3099. Mr. *Cheetham.*] From the greater quantity produced?—Yes.

3100. Lord *J. Manners.*] It does not arise, then, from any fault on the part of the workpeople?—No, not in the least.

3101. Mr. *Cheetham.*] It is from the greater rapidity with which the frame is worked, and the inferiority of the stocking also, is it not?—Yes; formerly it was an article of dress, and people were particular about it; now it is only an article of use.

3102. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware whether any alteration has taken place of late years in the selling value of frames; can frames be purchased now at the same prices as they were purchased at ten years ago, do you think?—I give the same price for them now that I always gave; I give the same price for new insides, I think, as I gave 30 years ago.

3103. Are you of opinion that there is a superfluous quantity of machinery now in the trade?—Yes; and a good part of it I would not have at any price; if they would make me a present of it I would not have it.

3104. Is that because of the description of the machinery?—Yes; I would not have it, to employ it.

3105. Do you acknowledge that there are more narrow frames in the market than are wanted for the purposes of the trade?—No, there are not more in the trade than are wanted; it is only in the flat seasons that they are short of work; in busy seasons there is always plenty of work.

3106. You have said that the people you employ are very seldom short of work?—The parties I employ always have plenty of work.

3107. How do you explain that, because there is a general complaint of occasional depression and stagnation of trade?—Yes; the sock trade is at a standstill; I am scarcely employing any people in that branch at all.

3108. Notwithstanding the changes of fashion, and the other circumstances which you have mentioned as diminishing the demand for wrought hose, so far as you are connected with the trade there is no lack of employment at all?—Not in the wrought-hose branch; in the straight-down branch there is a great lack of employment, and also in the sock branch.

3109. How do you account for that?—It arises from the employment of the circular machine; that is undermining all the wide frames.

3110. It produces the same quality of goods with greater rapidity, does it not?—Yes; and it makes them at from 80 to 90 per cent. less cost.

3111. But that does not affect the wrought-hose branch at all?—I am afraid it will affect every branch; I know it affects the Hinckley branch very much at present.

3112. But, as far as your experience goes, it has not affected the wrought-hose branch with regard to the employment which you are in the habit of giving out?—No; we generally keep our hands going all the year round; we must keep them going, to some extent, all the year round, or we should not get up a stock ready for the season. We always have a greater demand during the months of August, September, and October than we have in all the other months put together, and we must make goods ready for the season, or we should not be able to supply our customers.

3113. Do I understand you to say that the demand is sufficient to enable you to supply your hands with work all the year round?—Yes.

3114. The demand for goods being greater at certain seasons than it is at others, you extend the employment so occasioned over the whole year, and that furnishes your hands with full employment?—Yes; our hands are generally kept on very regularly. Perhaps we are, without exception, one of the most regular houses in the trade.

3115. Then so far as you are connected with the trade, the wrought hose is not the most depressed branch of it?—The socks and the straight-downs at present are the most depressed parts of the trade.

3116. Do I understand you to say that workmen upon the wrought-hose branch can, in the course of the year, earn more than they can upon the other branch?—

branch?—No, I do not say that; because when the straight-downs are in work they can get more money, as they are worked by a different class; generally the straight-downs are worked by the best of hands, and the wrought hose are worked by women and young hands.

3117. The straight-down machines requiring more strength than the others?—Yes, and they must be worked by men; whereas the others are generally worked by women, and slow hands, and young hands.

3118. They do not require more skill, but more strength?—Yes; there must be more skill to work a straight-down double frame.

3119. There must be more skill to work that than a narrow frame?—Yes; any one can work a narrow frame.

3120. Mr. *Gardner.*] Children can work narrow frames, can they not?—Yes; children of 12 or 13 years of age.

3121. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] With what practice?—Not much. They soon get into it. I have had work from hands who have been put to frames only three or four weeks, and who have produced as good work as anybody. Sometimes the hands have said to me, "This is my son's work." They have been proud of it, and said, "He has just learnt to make a stocking; see what a nice stocking he makes."

3122. Sir *H. Halford.*] Under the operation of that characteristic, with regard to the narrow frame, the earnings of a family would possibly be greater upon the wrought-hose branch than upon the straight-down branch?—Yes; because the outgoings are not so great.

3123. The wrought-hose branch prevails greatly at Hinckley, and in that neighbourhood, does it not?—Yes; we have frames everywhere in that direction.

3124. Are not complaints in that district more general than they are in any other part of the county?—Certainly not.

3125. Are you of opinion that the workmen of Hinckley are equally well off with those in Leicester, and in other parts of the county?—Yes, I think so; they receive as good wages, and produce as much work. I do not know anything about the straight-down branch at Hinckley. I am alluding to the wrought-hose branch, the worst-paid branch of the stocking community.

3126. Mr. *Biggs.*] You are aware, are you not, that there is a very general opinion prevailing that the profits which are derived from frames are very large?—Yes, that has been stated, I know. You are aware that I bought 12 frames of you for a very trifling sum, and I must say they were very dear. Every one of them had to be recruited, and one of them went to the scrap shop as old iron.

3127. You say you have been in business 30 years?—More than 30.

3128. And you have upwards of 1,000 frames of your own?—Yes.

3129. From your experience of those 1,000 frames, do you mean to tell the Committee that the profit which you derive from each of them is 16 *s.*, and no more?—It is 10 per cent.

3130. Sixteen shillings a year?—Yes.

3131. You still adhere to that statement?—Yes.

3132. You believe that statement to be true?—As far as I can judge.

3133. Lord *J. Manners.*] Supposing that instead of costing 7 *l.* 10 *s.* each, these frames cost something less, would your calculation still hold good?—No; because they would want a mould less perhaps.

3134. Will you state what you gave Mr. Biggs for the frames of which you have spoken, as having been purchased by him?—Perhaps it is hardly fair to say.

3135. At all events, it was not 7 *l.* 10 *s.*?—No; I think there were a dozen of them; they cost me considerably less than that; but they cost me 3 *l.* 10 *s.* at the end of it.

3136. Mr. *Gardner.*] The frames to which you allude were dear, at all events, at the price you gave for them, whatever it was?—Yes; these others were cheaper frames at 7 *l.* 10 *s.*

3137. You have told us that you looked over your book and selected from it a certain number of frames?—No, we did not select them; we took them just as they came.

3138. What principle guided you in the selection of these frames?—We picked out the new insides.

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3139. You picked out those that had new insides to them?—Yes; we thought that was the fairest plan. If the Committee would like to see the frame-book, I shall be very happy to forward it for their inspection.

3140. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] The whole 1,000 frames?—I would not mind forwarding the whole 1,000.

3141. *Chairman.*] You have been talking of frames of your own; with regard to the independent frames, I think you say you do not receive any rent for them?—Not a single farthing.

3142. To whom, then, do the framework-knitters pay their rent; they do not use them rent free, I suppose?—No; but a good many of the frames belong to the framework-knitters themselves; but the great bulk of them belong to such persons as the two I have named before.

3143. Are there any instances within your knowledge of framework-knitters paying any acknowledgement or rent for frames belonging to themselves?—Never; but as you refer to that, I will state that during the last 30 years it has often happened that in a flat time parties have come to me and said, "If you will give employment to my frames, I will pay you the rent."

3144. And has that often been accepted by you?—No, not by me. The remark I have made to them has been, "If you were to lay me down 1,000*l.* upon the table, I would not take a farthing from you."

3145. Do you know of any instances in which frame rent has been demanded where the frame has belonged to the knitter himself?—No; I never did such a thing.

3146. Lord *J. Manners.*] You were not asked whether you had ever done such a thing yourself, but whether you knew of any instance in which it had been done?—No, I do not know of any instance of the kind; I never knew of a single case, nor did I ever hear of a case of the sort.

3147. *Chairman.*] Supposing a benevolent neighbour should endeavour to assist a framework-knitter to obtain a frame of his own, if a great portion of these independent frames belong to them, it would be an advantage to the framework-knitter to possess his own frame, would it not; would he not be in a better situation if he could get employment for his frame?—Yes; but every time his frame wanted recruiting it would be a great expense to him.

3148. I am supposing a person to be desirous to benefit his poorer neighbour by endeavouring to assist him to get a frame of his own; do you imagine that he would benefit him by so doing?—Of course it would be a saving to him of something considerable.

3149. Do you think that a workman would get employment if he became possessed of a frame of his own?—I should like to employ him, because he would be an honest man.

3150. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you aware that Mr. Buckby has stated that framework-knitters would have to pay rent, even if they used their own frames?—I am not aware of that.

3151. That was his statement; do you agree with him?—No; I do not think that could be proved; I never heard of any such instances.

3152. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have told us that the workpeople themselves have offered to pay rent for their own frames if you would give them employment?—Parties owning machinery have said, at certain times of the year, when trade has been very flat, or when the season has been over, that if I would give them employment for their frames they would pay me rent; but I have always set my face entirely against such a system.

3153. Do you suppose you are the only gentleman to whom such an offer has been made?—No; it has been made, no doubt, to everybody in the trade in Leicester, and I think it would be generally rejected.

3154. *Chairman.*] Were you present when Mr. Baines was examined?—Yes.

3155. Do you remember hearing him say that he would not employ framework-knitters who had their own frames?—We employ a good many who have their own frames; he meant to say, that he would not employ them at certain times of the year when trade was flat.

3156. I think I understood from you that the operative to whose statement you have referred, and who lives at Sharnford, or in the neighbourhood of Hinckley, was always constantly employed by you?—Always; he has worked to me for the last 25 years.

3157. And

3157. And I think I understood you to say your trade is so extensive, that you are able to employ your operatives all the year round, in order that you may have a sufficient supply to meet the demand in August, September, and October?—Yes, we generally do so.

3158. Then those workmen who own their own frames would, with you, receive employment all the year?—Yes, if they are good hands. I have a few cases here which I took out of my own book, and which I should like the Committee to see. They are cases of people who worked to me direct. They do not come through middlemen like Mr. Turner and Mr. Lawrence, but they come to me direct. I think it is very necessary that these cases should come before the Committee, because they will stand investigation. There is no middleman in these cases; it is the father of the family generally, or the mother.

3159. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Working direct to yourself?—Yes; without any charges, except for carriage and loss of time when they bring their work in. Here is Mrs. Spence, of Enderby, 15 dozens at 3 *s.*; they come to 2 *l.* 5 *s.*; she has four frames, and two weeks' rent for them is 8 *s.* The net money would be 1 *l.* 17 *s.*; that would be clear to herself. I said to her when she came in, "Will you be kind enough to tell me who works this hose?" She said, "Myself and three daughters." They bring their work in every fortnight; that is 18 *s.* 6 *d.* a week. Then I said to her, "How much bread do you use in a week?" She said 12 loaves, and that bread costs her 3 *s.* a week more now than it used to do, bread being so much dearer. These hose were 3 *d.* more per dozen three months ago.

3160. Mr. *Gardner.*] How old were her daughters?—One was 16, another 18, and the other 24.

3161. Lord *J. Manners.*] There is nothing deducted in her case for shop charges?—No; the work is done in her own house. I am not speaking about her husband; I know nothing about him; this is the mother and three daughters. This is the note I sent to her: "Will you let us know per return what quantity of bread you consume in a week (that is, you and your family), also how many there are in family; let us know by Saturday (to-morrow)." This was on the 18th of this month. Her answer is, that they consume 12 quartern loaves in the week.

3162. What is the price of bread now?—Sevenpence halfpenny.

3163. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How many persons are employed in that case?—The mother and three daughters.

3164. And what is the amount of their earnings?—Eighteen shillings and sixpence per week.

3165. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you propose to prove by this statement?—I propose to prove that when corn is dear labour is always the cheapest; that has been the case in my experience; and when the price of bread is low wages are always the highest. If there are half a dozen in the family it makes 5 *s.* a week difference to them. The produce of our trade in Leicester is worn entirely by the working classes of England.

3166. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Is none of it exported?—Of course there is a little exported, but the great bulk of our manufacture is worn by the working classes of this country; of course there is some exported, but the quantity is comparatively small; the great bulk is consumed in Great Britain.

3167. What was the price of bread when wages to the amount of 18 *s.* 6 *d.* were paid to these people?—Formerly the price of bread was only 4½ *d.*

3168. Lord *J. Manners.*] At what period?—About two years ago, I think.

3169. Can you go back to the period when wages were still higher; were they not higher than that 20 years ago?—Not much higher; not for this description of goods.

3170. Were they higher 50 years ago?—Yes; but there were but few made; they were worn as an article of dress; they were very prime stockings; people wore at that time breeches instead of trowsers.

3171. I think we have it in evidence, that many years ago the prices of labour in these branches of industry were much higher than they are now?—Yes; but the workmen could not make so many dozens as they make now, because the hose were better made; when I say that, I do not know that they were better made, but they were made of a superior yarn, and in a superior style altogether.

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3172. I want to come to your point as to wages being lower now because the price of bread is higher than it was; 50 years ago wages were higher than they are now, were they not?—Yes; it was a different thing altogether; we make stockings now that we can afford to sell at 2*s.* a dozen.

3173. Your theory as to the relation between the prices of labour in your trade and the price of bread does not apply, does it, to the circumstances of your trade 30, 40, or 50 years ago?—I cannot tell you anything about that.

3174. You have started a theory, which may be right or wrong, that the decrease in the amount of wages of your workpeople at this moment is owing to the rise which has taken place in the price of bread?—This is what I say: when provisions are dear in England it takes nearly the whole of the earnings of the working classes to buy bread; I mean that as to those who receive 12*s.*, 14*s.*, 15*s.*, or 16*s.* a week, agricultural labourers or others, it takes nearly the whole of their wages, if they have anything like a family, to buy bread.

3175. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And are the workmen able to obtain a corresponding advance in their wages?—No, never; it always depresses them.

3176. Lord *J. Manners.*] Your statement, I think, was this: that the wages in your particular trade are lower now than they were a year or two ago, because the price of bread is higher; is that your statement?—This is what I mean to say: that when corn is dear wages are always lower.

3177. I want to know how far back that statement holds good, as regards your own trade?—During my experience.

3178. Mr. *Gardner.*] For 30 years?—For 30 years.

3179. Do you mean this: that cheapness of provisions is a main element in the prosperity of the hosiery trade?—Yes, it is a main element; that, and a good foreign demand, sets things all alive in England.

3180. Lord *J. Manners.*] Let me call your attention to a statement made before the Commissioner, by Mr. William Biggs,—a statement of the price of wheat and the price of wages of the Leicestershire framework-knitters, from 1815 up to the year when this evidence was given in 1841. I find that in 1828 the price per dozen is given at 5*s.*, the average price of wheat is 60*s.* 5*d.*; in the following year, 1829, the price per dozen is 5*s.*, and the average price of wheat 66*s.* 3*d.*; in the year 1830 the price per dozen is 5*s.*, and the price of wheat 64*s.* 3*d.*; in the year 1840 the price is 4*s.* 6*d.*, and the price of wheat 66*s.* 4*d.*; in the year 1841 the price is 4*s.* 6*d.*, and the average price of wheat is 64*s.* 4*d*; and I find appended to this statement a note to the following effect: "The result is important, as showing how entirely the rate of wages has been uninfluenced by the price of food. It will also be observed, that in many of the years in which the distress was most poignant among the framework-knitters, as in 1820, 1821, 1827, 1833, and 1837, the price of wheat was very low." In your opinion is this a correct statement?—I cannot say anything about that. The years 1834, 1835, and 1836 were years of very great prosperity, and at that time corn was very low; and then, again, you know corn has been very low within the last five years.

3181. Do you dispute the statements in this note as to 1833 and 1837?—In 1833, 1834, 1835, and 1836 corn was generally very low. I recollect that there were very good wages paid at that time, and there was also a great demand for goods.

3182. Your memory is in opposition, then, to the statement appended to the evidence in this note, which is to the effect that in 1833 and 1837 distress was most prevalent among the framework-knitters?—Then it must have been in 1834, 1835, and 1836 that there was great prosperity.

3183. The prices in 1833 are 5*s.* per dozen, and 52*s.* 11*d.* is the price of wheat; in 1837 the prices are 4*s.* 9*d.*, and the price of wheat is 55*s.* 10*d.*?—I believe that was the year of the panic. Wool got up to 56*s.* and fell down to 29*s.* or 30*s.*, and trade was entirely at a standstill for a short time.

3184. *Chairman.*] I think you told the Honourable Member for Leicester that you had something to say with regard to Mr. Hanford, a middleman employed by you?—Yes; there are a few more cases which I think should come before the Committtee. There is Callis, of Markfield, 6*s.* a dozen, 1*l.* 16*s.*, and rent 3*s.* 8*d.*; the young son foots the hose; 1*l.* 13*s.* is the week's work. Then the next is Boulton, of Ansty, 16 dozen at 3*s.*; this is double rib; and 11 dozen at 6*s.* 8*d.*, which come to 5*l.* 14*s.*, the father and family; the double frame, of course, would be 2*s.*; that would be 10*s.* in the fortnight; the net

wages

wages would be 5 *l.* 4 *s.* This shop is a credit to any in the town and county of Leicester; if every workman would do as this workman and his family do we should hear nothing of distress, or of the net system, or anything else.

3185. Is it your opinion that the framework-knitters generally might, if they chose, avoid being in distress?—I do not say they could avoid it at all times, but they could lessen it; if every family did as this family is doing we should hear very little of distress; there might be times when trade would be overdone, but you would scarcely hear anything of distress; they work regular hours; they do not keep Saint Monday; they work every day very much alike.

3186. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] How many frames are there in the shop to which you have been referring?—Four.

3187. They are confined to one family, are they?—Yes, they are confined to one family.

3188. Mr. *Gardner.*] What are their net earnings?—£. 5. 4 *s.* they take from the warehouse every fortnight. I have a case or two from Barwell, near Hinckley. This is Hinckley work: Reuben Smith, of Barwell, near Hinckley, one dozen pair at 6 *s.*, one dozen at 6 *s.* 6 *d.*, one dozen and nine at 6 *s.* 9 *d.*, two dozen and two pairs at 4 *s.* 6 *d.*; making altogether 1 *l.* 14 *s.* 0¾ *d.*; that is the father and his three sons, and the wife seams: the rent is 4 *s.* John Parker, of Barwell, works about 80 frames to us; 22 are our own. Then we will say "A." does a dozen at 4 *s.*, "B." two dozen at 4 *s.*, "C." 3 dozen at 4 *s.*; in all cases the rent is 1 *s.*; that would be 3 *s.*, 7 *s.*, and 15 *s.*; "A." makes 50 dozen in the year; "B." makes 100 dozen; and "C." makes 150 dozen; the first lot comes to 30 *l.*, the second lot to 60 *l.*, and the third lot to 90 *l.* Now I reckon, at 5 per cent., the first lot would be 30 *s.*, the second 3 *l.*, and the third 4 *l.* 10 *s.* What I mean to say in allusion to this is, that the quick hand would pay me a larger profit than the slow hand.

3189. *Chairman.*] Let me call your attention to a paper which has been put in by Mr. Joseph Elliott: he is asked, "Have you another paper?" and he says, "Yes; a list of 12 men was given to me by a middleman, and the average earnings, after the deductions are made, amount to 5 *s.* 7 *d.* net money; the average net earnings of 12 shirt hands amount to 11 *s.* 4 *d.*" The witness delivered in a paper; can you give the Committee any information with respect to it?—Allow me to state this first: I have been told that about seven or eight years ago great agitation prevailed in the glove branch. The hands used to meet in a field called the Pasture every Sunday morning; the meeting was addressed by Messrs. Buckby, Elliott, Winters, & Co. I happened to be in Messrs. Biggs's counting-house shortly after that time; they told me that Mr. Buckby was the greatest enemy the glove hands had, and that in consequence of his interference they were obliged to break up their shops and dispose of their frames.

3190. Mr. *Biggs.*] Whose statement is this?—It was stated to me in your counting-house, I think, by your honourable self and your brother.

3191. Is it a written statement of your own?—Yes. They sent weekly several hundred pounds to Nottingham, because there was great agitation here, where they were allowed to make them, and I have not the slightest hesitation in saying there was not a firm in Leicester so much abused as the Biggs's. A party at this time stated in the public papers that he could not get more than 15 *s.*, but it was proved at the warehouse he got as much as 36 *s.*

3192. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Whose statement is this?—It is my statement.

3193. But you received that information from somebody else, did you not?—Yes; I was told of it only yesterday.

3194. Then it is mere hearsay?—It is a party that could prove it. Then here is another case: Charles Buswell, of Leicester, went before the Commissioner a few years ago, and stated that he could only get 4 *s.* 6 *d.* per week; but he forgot to state to the Commissioner that he had the care of a chapel, which occupied a good part of his time. The minister of the place told him what a figure he would cut if that question should be put to him by a Committee of the House of Commons, which was expected at that time. These are cases that came before Mr. Commissioner Muggeridge. Then the next case is John Palmer, of Bosworth, who stated that his hands could only get 5 *s.* per week; he also forgot to tell the Commissioner that some of them had domestic duties to perform, and that others were young hands. I asked another hand of the same place, named William Bradbury, how much his hands could get; he told

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me from 12 *s.* to 13 *s.* per week. I also asked him what made the difference. He replied, that his hands were men, and that they could do nearly three dozen per week; the price at that time was 5 *s.* per dozen.

3195. Mr. *Mundy.*] What time are you speaking of?—When the Commissioner was at Leicester, about ten years ago.

3196. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is the object of the paper to which you have been referring to show that the parties who appeared before the Commissioner made misstatements?—They made misstatements; they highly coloured the thing. I considered the greater part of the evidence that those people gave before the Commissioner was of a very questionable character. There was a case told me this morning by an Independent minister, in which they wanted a man to go and swear that he only got 8 *s.* a week, and that man said, "I could not do that; you must see by my family that I could not live on 8 *s.* a week."

3197. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Did you ask who that person was?—The gentleman who told me of it would have told me everything about it if I had wished to hear it.

3198. But he did not tell you everything about it?—He would have given me the name and full particulars if I had asked him.

3199. You say you met a minister, who told you something which he had heard from somebody else?—Yes; I came up with the gentleman in the same railway carriage; it was the Rev. Mr. Mays, of Wigston.

3200. And he told you that some person had wanted to persuade another to go and swear that which was not true?—Yes.

3201. Did you ask him who that person was?—He would have told me if I had asked him.

3202. But you did not ask him?—No, I did not.

3203. You did not ask him who the party was?—No; he was a very honest man; I suppose he was doing well; they wanted that man to go before the Commissioner upon that occasion, and state that he was only earning 8 *s.* a week.

3204. I want to know from you who those persons were who wanted that man to go before the Commissioner and swear that which was false?—I cannot tell.

3205. Do you think it is right, then, to bring forward such a case as evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons?—I am merely stating that which was told me this morning on my way here; the man himself will come before this Committee and prove it.

3206. If you are prepared to prove it, the Committee will be quite willing to hear you; but if you meet a man who merely says that somebody said something of somebody else, I think you will see that that is hardly evidence which can have any weight with us?—He would have given me the name of the party and all about it if I had wished it.

3207. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you mean to say that certain persons wanted the man to whom you allude to swear to that which they knew to be untrue; is that so?—Yes; but they did not want me to state it, only the thing occurred to me at the present moment.

3208. Do you think it is clear that they themselves did not believe it to be true, and that they did not desire him to swear to it because they believed it?—The man said that if he went before the Commissioner he should tell him the whole truth; he would not do for them.

3209. Did he tell them so?—Yes; if the man spoke the truth he would not do for them.

3210. Do you mean that these persons told the man that he would not do for them?—They knew that if the man told the truth he would not advance their cause at all.

3211. But did they say so to him?—No, I am not prepared to say that they did.

3212. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Your statement amounts to this: that some persons desired or wished another person to go and state before the Commissioner that which was incorrect and untrue; is not that so?—Yes.

3213. Mr. *Biggs.*] And that statement you believe to be true, do you?—Well, I heard it for truth, and I believe it to be true.

3214. Mr. *Gardner.*] You believe it to be true, from the character of your informant?—Yes.

3215. *Chairman.*]

3215. *Chairman.*] How do you know that your informant may not have been imposed upon?—He had it direct from the party himself; and this minister wished him not to go before the Commissioner.

3216. But this evidence, after all, only comes before us third hand?—Yes, that is so.

3217. Have you any other paper that you wish to produce to the Committee?—Yes, there is a paper as to Thomas Dayman's shop, of Enderby; this refers to the whole of his family by marriage; there are 12 names; their net earnings, after all expenses are paid, are 5*l.* 5*s.* 4*d.*

3218. Mr. *Mundy.*] In the week?—In the week; they are double frames, common wrought frames, that I am speaking of. With respect to the earnings here; they use four dozen and a half of bread, at 7*s.* 6*d.*; that is 1*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.*; and the bread, at 5*s.*, is 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

3219. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have calculated the value of the bread as regards the working classes generally?—They give 7 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen; that is, 7½*d.* a loaf; there are four dozen and a half; they receive net wages, 5 *l.* 5*s.* 4*d.*; but Thomas Dayman, the father, has the management of the shop, and he makes four dozen of these hose per week; and then, again, there is James Dayman, 16 years of age, and William Southam 16 years of age also; then there is George Southam, jun., 14 years of age, and two women besides; those people, together, get this 5 *l.* 5 *s.* 4 *d.*, after all expenses are paid.

3220. Your object, I suppose, in referring to that paper, is to show that those people get fair wages?—Yes.

3221. What are their average earnings?—Not quite 9 *s.* a week each; but you have there young hands and women.

3222. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That is in the wrought-hose branch?—Yes, in domestic manufacture; then I have here something which I consider it important should come before the Committee, because it will show you the new as well as the old principle, and it bears upon the question.

3223. Does the statement you have just referred to, which shows 9 *s.* a head, give the fair average of wages?—The fair average of wages of young and old.

3224. That is when they are constantly employed?—I suppose it is; it includes Saint Monday; I know those people like a holiday.

3225. There is no middleman to bring the work in?—No; the fact is, they almost always send the work in by one of the sons. This goes to show the new system, the net system, and the old system; it shows what you may call the factory system, where they work by steam power; this takes various branches of the trade. There is a man of the name of Collidge, who works one of these circular machines, producing 80 dozen a week. We have something else, which I shall be very happy, I am sure, to show any gentleman of this Committee should they happen at any time to be in Leicester; I will take you to the factory, so that you may see what is actually doing.

3226. *Chairman.*] Whose factory are you speaking of?—Our own factory.

3227. You have a net system there?—Yes, and we intend to adopt the net system entirely there.

3228. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it a steam factory?—Yes. The needles we will put at 2 *s.*, the casting 6 *d.*, seaming 1 *l.*, cutting out 1 *s.* 2 *d.*; altogether that will be two guineas; we call this 22 gauges; then 80 dozen, at 2 *s.* 1 *d.* upon the old system, that comes to 8 *l.* 6 *s.* 8 *d.*; take the two guineas off, and you will have 6 *l.* 4 *s.* 8 *d.* in favour of the new system.

3229. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What do you say with regard to the labour question?—The labour question is in favour of the new system; you get a saving of 6*l.* 4 *s.* 8*d.*; in one case it costs you two guineas, and in the other 8 *l.* 6 *s.* 8 *d.* Now, then, take the new system again; there are 180 dozen at three-halfpence; two in one machine.

3230. By one hand?—There are about three hands to this, but then they are young hands.

3231. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is that in one week?—In one week; they make 180 dozen from off one machine of 20 gauges.

3232. And you give three-halfpence a dozen?—Yes; that is 1 *l.* 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, the needles being 2 *s.*, the casting 6 *d.*, and the seaming in this instance will come to 1 *l.* 17 *s.* 6 *d.*; it is the greatest item; we want one of those new machines, the sewing machines, so as to do them wholesale.

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3233. Are these the net wages at three-halfpence a dozen?—Yes, but there is 2 *s.* 6 *d.* which should be added to that.

3234. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you give the three young females who are working three-halfpence a dozen?—Yes, for making 180 dozen.

3235. That amounts to 7 *s.* 6 *d.* a head?—Yes.

3236. You have no deductions?—No.

3237. Do you give them anything in addition to the 7 *s.* 6 *d.*?—No; I make a saving under the new system in this case of 11 *l.* 0 *s.* 6 *d.*

3238. But the earnings of the three younger people employed are 7 *s.* 6 *d.* each?—They vary from about 7 *s.* to 15 *s.*; some will get 15 *s.*

3239. Per week?—Yes, and some of the men will get from 9 *s.* to 25 *s.* a week.

3240. The highest they could obtain in the domestic part of the trade would be 9 *s.*; you have put that in the statement you have given us before?—Yes.

3241. Mr. *Gardner.*] Can you inform the Committee what is the cause of so great a variation in the amount of wages?—This is the net system and the improved machinery.

3242. You say a man will get from 9 *s.* to 25 *s.*?—Yes; in the factory they will do more work.

3243. Sir *J. Walmsley.* You are showing that there is a great advantage to be obtained by using the new machinery instead of the old?—In the factory. Then the next is the short branch; this machinery is very wide, nearly 200 inches wide; they make eight-twenties; by the new system, in shirts, we can make 45 dozen at 2 *s.* 3 *d.*, in three frames.

3244. That amounts to how much?—£. 5. 1 *s.* 3 *d.*

3245. Mr. *Gardner.*] How many parties are there employed there?—Three; in one case a man works one frame, and his wife works another; there is no physical force necessary; all they have to do is merely to notice that the thing is going on rightly; the husband and wife work the two shirt frames, and another man sleeves them.

3246. Then three persons divide the 1 *l.* 13 *s.* 9 *d.*?—Yes, but there is the seaming, and also the cuffs.

3247. Give us, if you please, the gross wages and the net wages?—I take the 45 dozen, and then I take the others; there would be a saving in favour of the new system of 6 *l.* 4 *s.* 3 *d.*; this 2 *s.* 3 *d.*, I see, includes seaming; in fact, I may say it includes everything.

3248. Are we to understand then that those three hands would earn 33 *s.* 9 *d.* each?—They would earn 5 *l.* 1 *s.* 3 *d.*; they would have to pay for the seaming out of that; I include the seaming in the 2 *s.* 3 *d.*

3249. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do they get 5 *l.* 1 *s.* 3 *d.* net wages?—We pay them 5 *l.* 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, and they have to pay for the seaming out of that.

3250. What is that?—I cannot tell, because they get them seamed; this 2 *s.* 3 *d.* includes the seaming, and it is a saving under the new system of 6 *l.* 4 *s.* 3 *d.*

3251. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Shall we be right in taking 30 *s.* as the net result, instead of 33 *s.*?—The fact is I did not think of it before I came out, and therefore I cannot say positively. Now, I think this is a matter which it is very important to refer to: we have three wide frames in the wrought-hose branch, two legging-frames, and one a footer; each of the legging-frames produces three pairs: that is, six stockings; the two leggers would produce six pairs at a time; there are 90 leads on. I have reckoned 50 dozen and three frames, at 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a dozen; that is, nothing but the common straight-wrought hose; these frames are worked by steam power; the hand has nothing to do but to look at them; under the old system 50 dozen would employ from 17 to 20 frames, at 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per dozen. Mr. Walker stated that he thought the system could not be carried out in the factories, but I know better. This goes to show that 4 *l.* 15 *s.* 10 *d.* will be in favour of the new system. You will bear in mind, if you please, that these three frames cost me more than 300 *l.*; they are of the very best description, and they are made on the most improved principle that can possibly be got up.

3252. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] They cost more than 100 *l.* each?—Yes; and they work beautifully.

3253. You are enabled to produce stockings off those frames, at how much?—At 1*s.* 10*d.*

3254. Which would cost, with other frames, how much?—Which would cost 3*s.* 9*d.*

3255. I understand you to say that by these frames, and the improved machinery, you produce stockings at 1*s.* 10*d.*, which would, with the ordinary machinery, cost 3*s.* 9*d.*?—Yes.

3256. What is the difference in quality between the article produced for 1*s.* 10*d.* and that produced for 3*s.* 9*d.*?—Not any; in fact, that which is done for 1*s.* 10*d.* is the clearest and the best work.

3257. Then the result is this; that all the narrow frames must cease to work, and the wide frames alone must be employed?—Not exactly that; there will always be some narrow frames employed, because they make a different description of goods, generally speaking, such as lambs' wool hose, fancy goods, and anything a little out of the way; 26 gauges and 30 gauges, and even higher than that if you like.

3258. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do those frames on which you pay 1*s.* 10*d.* fashion the hose?—Yes, as completely as anything you ever saw.

3259. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you think that there would be a certain quantity of narrow frames still employed, for any length of time, though you can now make stockings at half the price, and as good stockings, by your new machines as you can by narrow ones?—You know we make a great many sorts; there are different sorts of stockings; this system is straightforward work; anything very straightforward would do in this machinery, but where you want anything a little out of the way, such as men's plain hose, where they want coloured tops and toes, it would not answer to work them in this machinery; because there would take place little hindrances, such as striping, for instance, and so on; but this machinery must go ahead and do its work.

3260. If you propose, through your new machinery, to manufacture stockings of equal quality or better quality at half the price, would not the effect of those articles being so manufactured at half the price necessarily be to put out of work the narrow frames, to a great extent?—In course of time. Why have all our wide frames been still the last six months? why have I broken up one shop where I used to make 600 dozen a week, and do not make one now?

3261. Why is that?—Because the circular machinery has completely undermined the wide machinery, and it will undermine it.

3262. Then the object sought to be attained, of doing away with framerents, or other charges, will eventually be carried out, in your opinion, without an Act of Parliament?—Yes.

3263. Something to the same effect has also been given in evidence by other persons, but they have stated the period within which they have thought it would be carried out; may I ask you whether you have any definite idea upon that subject?—No, I have no idea; it may be 20, 30, 50, or 100 years hence.

3264. Tell me, if you please, why it is that you should think it may be 50 or 100 years before it takes place; if you, with your machinery, can produce better goods at half the price, why should it be 50 years before other people adopt the same system?—But you can only work straightforward goods in this machinery; you cannot make cashmere hose, or the hose which require stripes, topping, and toeing, and so on. All the hose you make on these machines you are obliged to make one size; they must be always one size, and one article, otherwise you must have a frame purposely for each different-sized hose. It is expensive machinery, and it must be very true, and put in the best of hands; so that it will really be a long time before it is generally established; then there will be the increase of the population going on too.

3265. If it be to the interest of the manufacturer, as it obviously must be his interest, to produce goods at half the price he now pays for them, do you not think that sufficient capital will be found in a much less period than that which you have talked of?—I dare say it will. Mr. Biggs knows we do not intend to stand still; we shall lay hold of the best machinery that can be invented to work by steam power; but then you cannot put those things in large shops and factories; they would eat their very heads off. There is another thing I wish to state, and I dare say Mr. Biggs can bear me out in it; this was given to me by a gentleman who had just returned from Saxony; the

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gentleman's name is Mr. Place. This party sends a good deal of yarn to Saxony. This is the hosiery trade,—a similar trade to our own,—and I think it is very important we should all know what is going on with respect to the hosiery trade at Chemnitz, which is a great manufacturing place. In the centre of Saxony large factories are established there which make the circular hose the same as ours at Leicester; the machines are worked by steam power; the foreman there receives his 10*s.* a week, the females in that factory receive from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per week making circular hose; they have steam presses and steam ironers to get up the goods; they are upon a much superior scale to our own, because they have one tier above another, so that they can lay them to any extent; it is an hydraulic press. They get up their goods in a much superior style to ours by means of these presses. The best wrought hands get 4*s.* per week out of the factory; there the system pursued is a little different from ours; this gentleman also stated that 2*l.* with them will go as far as 5*l.* with us. They send of course a large supply of their hosiery to England, we have sold a great many of them; but the greatest bulk of their goods goes to the American market; these stockings come in competition with our own. The manufacturer there is placed upon the same footing as you may say the middleman is here; in the first place, the workman himself buys so much yarn to make a week or a fortnight's work, or whatever the quantity may be; what you may call the manufacturer or middleman brings in this work to him; what we should term manufacturers are merchants there. The middleman sells these goods to the merchant, so that a manufacturer in Saxony has no risk whatever; his article is paid for; that is, the raw material the yarn, is paid for when he gives out the work, and when it is brought in, he balances it and gives more out, so that there cannot be, properly speaking, any embezzlement there such as you find in Leicester, or in the hosiery trade generally.

3266. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So far as it is a domestic manufacture, they are liable, are they not, to the same amount of embezzlement as you are?—No; the middleman or the manufacturer sells them the yarn in the first instance, and then the workman takes in his goods.

3267. But the work is still distributed among the cottagers, is it not?—Yes, the wrought hose branch is distributed the same as in England, I believe; the frames, generally speaking, belong to the workmen themselves.

3268. The introduction of steam there is of recent origin, is it not?—Yes; but they have everything done in very nice style, they have copied much from this country, and they have everything done on a very nice principle; there are steam engines, and presses, and so on, so that they can get up their goods very nicely indeed.

3269. Do you wish the Committee to infer from the recent remarks you have made in reference to the advance of steam power in the manufacture of hosiery, that there is in progress that which will, to a great extent, supersede the domestic manufacture of wrought hose?—Yes.

3270. You think that will ensue in the natural course of trade?—Of course.

3271. And as a practical man of business, would you allow the thing to take its own course, or would you have Parliament hasten matters by legislation?—It is out of the power of the Legislature to hasten it; if such a law were to come into operation to-morrow not one of us could act upon it.

3272. Do you agree with Mr. Biggs in the opinion he has expressed, that any interference, whether by the progress of steam machinery, on the one hand, or legislation on the other, which interferes with the wrought hose branch of the trade, would throw a considerable number of the population out of employ?—If they were to establish the net system, and we had not any interest in our own machinery, in flat times I should not employ one of them.

3273. With regard to the net system which you have adopted in your steam factory, you are aware, are you not, that Mr. Biggs, and other gentlemen in Leicester, have adopted that system with reference to workmen not in the factory?—Mr. Biggs has not adopted it at all, for they are actually taking rents at the present moment.

3274. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] That is, their middlemen are?—Yes; and in the wrought hose branch they employ next to none.

3275. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you mean that the middlemen are subject to poundage

poundage at the warehouse, and that they take rent also?—Yes; I have had them within my own counting-house, within the last fortnight, and some of them pay rent to the warehouse at the present moment.

3276. The poundage being taken, the middleman at the same time takes frame-rent?—Yes; they take frame-rent as well.

3277. So that the workman is subject to a double charge, the poundage and the frame-rent?—No, I do not mean that; the middleman charges the same frame-rent as usual; he knows he cannot adopt the poundage system with his workmen.

3278. You mean he may adopt it with Mr. Biggs, but then he cannot carry it out with his workmen?—No; the hands will not work upon the net system; it was the same with Mr. Collins, when he adopted the net system; the best hands in the factory quarrelled with it.

3279. *Chairman.*] The middleman, as I understand you, is exacting frame-rent from the workpeople, unknown to the hosier; is that so?—I do not know whether it is unknown to any hosier.

3280. Mr. Biggs adopts the poundage system with the middlemen, and the middlemen are exacting from the workpeople these frame-rents?—Yes.

3281. But that must be without Mr. Biggs's knowledge?—I know they do take frame-rent direct; there has been an agitation going on for the last two years; why has not Mr. Mitchell, or Mr. Biggs, attempted it on the wrought hose? I say, if there is no great difficulty in the matter, why not attempt it? And if it is found to be successful, then come to this Committee, and recommend it, and say that they have tried it, and have found it to be beneficial; why is not that done?

3282. Then do you wish us to understand that the system which is adopted within steam-mills, of paying a net wage per dozen, is not adopted anywhere outside the factories?—It is not adopted anywhere outside.

3283. I wish to ask you, as a practical man, whether you do not think that that system is capable of adoption?—No; and I will give you the reason why I think it is not; the great diversity of hands and frames, and their irregularity, will make the adoption of the net system impossible.

3284. Suppose inside the mill you give 3 ½ *d.* per dozen for 80 dozen, and suppose that 80 dozen falls down to 50 dozen, the price remains the same; you are no doubt injured, but the hand has less per week than he had before?—Yes.

3285. What difficulty is there in applying the same principle outside the mill?—I have just told you; it is a family trade; one hand can do a dozen, another can do two dozen, and another can do three; if you take the medium course, and take the work from the quick hand and put it to the slow hand, what will the quick hand say to you? He will say, "You are robbing me;" but the slow hand will say, "Oh, that will do very well."

3286. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] It has been put to you, suppose it is 3 ½ *d.* a dozen, and a slow hand makes 50 dozen instead of 80, how is he robbed? If one man makes three dozen, and another one dozen, and the one man gets paid for three dozen while the other only gets paid for one dozen, is there anything wrong in that?—No; if he can make three dozen of hose there is nothing wrong in that.

3287. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does the impossibility of carrying out the net system arise from the impossibility of agreeing with the workmen as to the proper standard to be adopted?—I do not know how we could agree with them; we must adopt one uniform price for one class of goods; if a dozen of hose was 3 *s.*, the one would get 3 *s.*, and of course the other would get 9 *s.*

3288. If you take 1 *s.* for rent off the 9 *s.*, that will leave 8 *s.*?—Yes, it leaves 8 *s.*, and in the other case it leaves 2 *s.*

3289. Could you not take that as a basis for adopting the principle of the net system?—No, because some of the frames are not under our control at all; in fact, none of the frames can be said to be under our control; they are at a distance from us.

3290. The net system implies that there must be a fair equivalent for rent in the deduction from the present price paid to the workmen?—If there are any other expenses they must be deducted. This is what I mean to say: If a man makes three dozen of hose at 4 *s.*, and you take the 1 *s.* rent, that would, of course, leave him 11 *s.*; and if you divide the 1 *s.* by three, that would be 4 *d.*

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per dozen; take a dozen, on the other hand, at 4 *s.*, and take off 1 *s.*, that only leaves him 3 *s.*, and it is 1 *s.* a dozen. According to the net system, one of those men must have 3 *s.* 8 *d.* for his work, and the other 3 *s.*

3291. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you not now practically do so?—I pay them all alike.

3292. Then if one man is idle and does not choose to work, and another is industrious and does work, and one man produces three dozen and another only one dozen, would it not be a fair principle to pay the whole at a certain rate per dozen, so that the idle man should only get paid in proportion to his work, and the industrious man in proportion to his work?—I should not get a hand to make them at 3 *s.* dozen; I might at 3 *s.* 8 *d.* or 3 *s.* 6 *d.* perhaps, but I should not be able to get a hand to work to me to make a dozen of hose at 3 *s.*

3293. I cannot understand that?—Nor I.

3294. Why?—Because he would not work at that price; he is now having 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen; he can do two dozen if he likes, or he can do only one dozen.

3295. Mr. *Biggs.*] If he only produces one dozen he does virtually work for 3 *s.* a dozen?—Yes.

3296. Mr. *Cheetham.*] A frame in the wrought hose department will produce, with a good workman, three dozen a week at 4 *s.* a dozen, will it not?—Yes.

3297. That is 12 *s.*?—Yes.

3298. What deduction shall we take off for rent and other stoppages?—Two shillings.

3299. Then the net earnings for a good hand would be 10 *s.*?—Yes.

3300. Supposing him to do three dozen, that would be 3 *s.* 4 *d.* a dozen?—Yes.

3301. That is the net result to the hand?—Yes.

3302. Then why cannot you issue a list at 3 *s.* 4 *d.*, and then if a hand only made two dozen he would necessarily get less than if he made three dozen?—Yes; but if we had a net system, every hand should make a certain quantity; there should be a law passed that every man should make a certain quantity. There is a part of the machinery that does not belong to you; part belongs to a variety of people, and part to the manufacturers; and perhaps during the harvest time they will do little or nothing; you lose the whole of the interest on your capital employed in machinery at that time.

3303. Would not those difficulties which you point out hasten on the system by which you would concentrate the work in your steam-mills?—I could not concentrate the narrow frames in steam-mills.

3304. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean that, on the net system, idleness and irregularity on the part of some of the workmen would prevent your getting a sufficiently remunerative return for your capital invested in machines?—Yes; and in how much better a position a manufacturer would be if he was just commencing business under the net system; he has no machinery to keep in order. He will go round to the hands, and say, "You only get so much from the warehouse; I will give you 3 *d.* a dozen more;" how could we prevent that? The thing would be impossible.

3305. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Could not the middleman carry out the poundage system upon the same principle as that on which he agrees with Mr. Biggs?—They have not carried it out yet satisfactorily.

3306. Suppose they did, would that remove the source of complaint?—No.

3307. Mr. Muggeridge, the Commissioner, has stated, in answer to a question I put to him, that the main result of any interference by Parliament on this question, would be to remove the cause of complaint on the part of the workmen?—They never can remove that; they will always be complaining in all branches.

3308. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I thought you said you never heard any complaints?—I never had any complaint brought direct to me; the best paid portion of the community at Leicester, such as glove hands, have always been turning out and upbraiding the manufacturers, and it is the interest of designing men to lead them on and make them dissatisfied; and why? to get what they can out of them.

3309. The object of those turn-outs has been to obtain higher wages, has it not?

not?—I do not know what it has been for, but they frequently have that in view.

3310. Have they succeeded in obtaining higher wages?—Very seldom. I never knew a turn-out do any good in my life. I recollect turn-outs in 1826 for 15 or 16 weeks, and when they got to work after turning out 15 or 16 weeks, they would get into debt wherever they possibly could, break up unions, and borrow money of other parties, and then go to work at whatever price they could get; they could maintain this, perhaps, for a year or two.

3311. In any of the turn-outs to which you have alluded, have the workmen ever made this question of rent a subject of complaint?—It never was agitated till within the last few years.

3312. Lord *J. Manners.*] What do you call the last few years?—Since the Chartist agitation occurred.

3313. When was that?—A few years ago.

3314. Can you fix any date?—I cannot call to mind the exact time; about ten or twelve years ago.

3315. Mr. *Gardner.*] Who were the first agitators?—Mr. Feargus O'Connor and his land scheme.

3316. Lord *J. Manners.*] That is comparatively recent; do you mean to say there were no complaints of the frame-rent until the land scheme?—I recollect a Bill that came into operation seven or eight years ago, and when it came into operation we all looked at it; it seemed very well upon the ticket system, and there it ended, for none of us could act upon it. George Lawrence told me yesterday how he acted upon it; he put down a shilling a dozen for 7 *s.* hose; he said to the workmen, "You understand me; we can place confidence in each other."

3317. I think I understand, from answers you have given to questions put to you by several Members of this Committee, that if you were told that, in the natural course of events, the present frame-rent system would give way to what is called the net system, you would not believe such a statement?—If they were to pass an Act to-morrow, it would be evaded directly.

3318. I understand you to say, that if you were told that, in the natural course of events, the frame-rent system would give place to a net system, you would not believe such a statement?—It never could be adopted out of the factory; it may be adopted in the factory, but never out of it; it must be done with the improved machinery, and not with the old-fashioned machinery.

3319. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you speak of the frame-rent system, do you mean the system of stoppage from wages? Because there might still be the frame-rent system, frame-rents being recoverable by the ordinary course of law. But do you think that frame-rents enforced by stoppages from wages can ever cease in the natural course of events?—My impression is, that frame-rents and charges will never be abolished under the old system.

3320. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What is meant is, that the frame-rent should become a question of debt between you and the workmen?—Why should it? I do not like frame-rent, which is my natural right, to become a question of debt.

3321. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do you not know that in the case of recovering rent, you may recover it as a debt or by distress; you might abolish the law, empowering you to recover it by distress and sale, and still allow a person to have his remedy, by recovering it as a debt; might you not here, in the same way, dispense with the summary remedy of stopping the rent from wages, leaving the party to recover his frame-rent by the ordinary course of law?—We should never get it in that way, because there would be nothing to fall back on.

3322. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you speak of frame-rents as your natural right, is there more natural right to recover a frame-rent by summary process than there is to recover a debt contracted on any other account?—Yes; I consider you are as much entitled to frame-rent as a landowner is entitled to rent for his land; it is one and the same thing; at all events, I look upon it as such.

3323. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You were not asked whether you had as much right to it, but whether you had more?—I say that I am as much entitled to frame-rent as a landowner is entitled to his land-rent.

3324. Is there a greater natural right, do you think, in your case, than there is in the case of a man who deals in provisions, a butcher or a baker, to recover

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the sum due to him?—Do you ask whether I think frame-rent ought to come before a debt?

3325. You speak of the right to recover frame-rent as being a natural right; do you think it is necessary or right that it should be enforced by such means as stoppage from wages?—When a man brings his work in, I ought to have my rent, according to custom.

3326. But a butcher or a baker has no such means of enforcing the payment of debts due to him?—Because he has not the machinery.

3327. Do you think that a frame-owner has a right to be put in a better position than an ordinary tradesman?—That is the custom that has grown up with us for the last hundred years.

3328. *Chairman.*] If a farmer owns cottages for the labourers he employs, do you imagine that he has power, at the end of the week, to stop the rent for those cottages from the wages he pays to his labourers?—It depends upon the bargain he makes with them.

3329. Is there any bargain with the framework-knitters?—Yes, it is a bargain.

3330. Always, in all cases?—It is a contract; it is as much a contract as any bargain in this world that was ever made between one man and another.

3331. Sir *H. Halford.*] In ordinary transactions, no such bargain can be made, because no wages are due between the parties?—No; because, perhaps, there is no machinery.

3332. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In the case of the farmer, he might bargain that he should be allowed to stop the rent at certain periods?—Yes; he might stop it quarterly or half-yearly.

3333. It would be a matter of bargain?—Yes, which no third person has a right to interfere with.

3334. There is nothing in the present state of things with you to prevent you from bargaining to receive the rent of your frame monthly?—No; if the net system were to come into operation to-morrow, I could make a bargain with my hands the same as I do now. I might say, "So-and-so will be due to me, and I shall expect this before you commence working."

3335. Sir *H. Halford.*] As between master and workman, the law interposes to prevent the master, who is at the same time a dealer in provisions, from enforcing payment for those provisions by stoppage from wages; that is what is called the Truck Act?—Yes; I have nothing to do with that Act.

3336. In order to make the law consistent, should not the same interdiction apply to frame-rents?—There is no law to stop us at present from taking rent. There is the present Truck Act, which states, I think, that the man who takes out work shall know what he has to receive from the warehouse, and what his wages are; it requires that it shall be put down on a ticket.

3337. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] It does not say anything about rent?—No; but I think the Act says there shall be no stoppages from the amount of the wages; I believe that is the Act; of course we could not stop for rent very well under that Act.

3338. Let me go back a little; I think you have told us that a circular frame, costing 100 *l.*, would, upon the net system, produce about 80 dozen a week; am I right in that?—I think a circular frame would not cost us 100 *l.*, or anything like that; it would not cost more than about 30 *l.*

3339. How much does one of your new fashioned frames cost?—They cost about 120 *l.* each.

3340. How many dozen a week will they produce?—From 20 to 25 dozen.

3341. What would a narrow frame produce if it was worked regularly?—By three sets of hands, man, woman, and child, you may average them at two dozens each.

3342. Per week?—Yes.

3343. You have told me that this new frame would produce 25 dozen a week with three hands?—No, with one hand.

3344. What will a narrow frame produce; the same style of work?—It depends upon the hand; from one to four dozen a week.

3345. You told us that the quality of the 25 dozen made by that frame would be better than that made by the narrow frame; but that they could not manufacture some particular stripe in it?—Some particular sorts; they have not been brought to bear upon that yet; they will ultimately, no doubt.

3346. Will

3346. Will you tell me what benefit that stripe is to the stocking; is it mere fancy?—Mere fancy; the fact is, it makes them look better.

3347. Where is that stripe?—Some of them on the welts, and some of them are in the middle of the white top.

3348. What proportion of the hose made in the narrow frames contains that stripe?—The top part of the stocking.

3349. Do all the hose made in the narrow frames contain that stripe?—I can make any stripes I think proper.

3350. I want to know whether all the hose made in the narrow frames have any stripe in them, such as you cannot make in a large frame?—We stripe the wrought hose in the factory, but we do not put white tops to them; we do not make them with coloured legs and white tops; it is a little hinderance, you will bear in mind.

3351. What proportion of the hose made in the narrow frame contains that stripe?—It is the top part of the stocking.

3352. I want to know what proportion of the wrought hose that are made have that stripe at all; do all stockings contain it that are made in the narrow frames?—No; they could make them if they like with as many stripes as they please.

3353. I want to know what proportion of the whole of the hose made in the narrow frames contains that stripe?—I cannot give you an answer to that question; perhaps Mr. Biggs will put the question, and then I shall understand it better.

3354. I ask you what proportion of the whole of the hose made in narrow frames contains a stripe at all. I have put that question three or four times; I think anybody else can understand it?—Then I wish they would explain it to me, for I cannot understand it.

3355. You have said that in certain stockings, made in the narrow frames, there is a stripe?—No; I did not say that; I said they could make them with stripes, and they could not make them without a hinderance in the wide frames; it would hinder them very much; but in the narrow frames they could put them in without much hinderance; we stripe all our stockings in the narrow frames.

3356. You stripe all yours?—Yes.

3357. Do other manufacturers?—No; some make them quite plain, and do not stripe them at all.

3358. Can you tell the Committee what proportion of the whole manufacture of hose made in narrow frames contains a stripe at all?—I cannot answer that question.

3359. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do they all contain stripes?—No; some manufacturers make them without stripes, and some with; we make ours with.

3360. Taking the entire produce of all the manufacturers, do they all contain stripes?—No.

3361. Do half of them?—I cannot speak to that.

3362. Cannot you approach it?—No, for I do not know anything about it; you may make any sort of stockings without the factories; you may make half-a-dozen of this sort of a certain width, or half-a-dozen men's or women's stockings; you cannot alter the machine in the factory; you must commence with 90 leads, and always go on with them till you alter the machine altogether; you cannot be changing about as you can in narrow frames.

3363. I understand you to say, that in the machine you have now spoken of, the circular machine, you can produce as good, or better, articles than you can in the narrow frames?—I can produce as good and better; when you come to the warehouse I will just show you a dozen from the regular frames, and I will also show you a dozen from the factory frame, so that you will give your opinion there and then upon the spot, which look the best.—[*The Witness delivered in certain Papers referred to in the course of his Evidence.*]

Vide Appendix.

Veneris, 25° *die Maii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Packe.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Wickham.
Sir Joshua Walmsley.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Biggs.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. *Thomas Corah*, called in; and further Examined.

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3364. *Chairman.*] IS not work given out frequently, when there is no demand for it, merely for the purpose of obtaining rent for the frame?—I never did that.

3365. But is not that a thing of frequent occurrence in the trade?—It would be impossible for me to answer that question; I know so little about others in the town and the system they adopt; I find plenty to do in minding my own business.

3366. I think you have given the Committee to understand that a frame suffers injury by standing still?—It does.

3367. Would not that operate as an inducement to give out work for no other purpose than that of employing the frame?—It depends upon the kind of work; if it is not wanted, it is no inducement.

3368. If the frame is injured by standing still, would not that be an inducement to give out a small quantity of work, simply to keep the frame in employment?—No, not any; I never did in my life give out short work; I always give out as much as the hands can do.

3369. You stated last Tuesday that there was an undertaker of yours at Sharnford, I think, who gave you an account of 100 frames?—Yes.

3370. Thirty-two of those frames were employed by men, 22 by stocking-makers' children, 30 by agricultural labourers' children, and 16 by agricultural labourers' wives, making altogether 100?—Yes.

3371. Those were narrow frames, I think?—Yes.

3372. Do they all, whether the workmen are able-bodied men or children, strong or weak hands, pay the same rent?—Yes; I have a note in my hand which bears a little upon that point from a manufacturer at Hinckley, in which he says, "I have myself had much experience, 22 years, with stocking making, and I have to regret much that parents will continue to put their children to the trade, as unfortunately a man can earn no more than he could in his boyhood. I will quote an instance as regards the work produced. Men, women, and children have been making a certain class of goods all at the same price per dozen. I have, without an exception, preferred those made by a boy, 12 years of age, before all the others. Where there are two or three children assisting their parents all seems to go on very smoothly; but, alas! when they arrive at manhood, their earnings are no more than they were when children; it is hand-loom weaving; there are only a few motions to be learnt (that is to say, they soon get into it); a high rate of wages can never be secured; it is altogether a domestic employment, and when children can compete with their parents, the remuneration for the labour must of necessity be low." That is stated in a letter from a manufacturer at Hinckley to myself.

3373. I think you have already said that you do not take the rent when workmen are disabled in consequence of sickness?—Yes.

3374. Do you know whether that is or is not a frequent practice among other manufacturers?—I cannot say.

3375. You

3375. You have not heard of that?—No; I have not heard of it.

3376. I believe you have said that Monday is very frequently made a holiday, and that the workmen do not work on that day?—A great number of them make St. Monday of it; I do not say that every one does, but a great many do.

3377. Is it not very often the case, that that does not arise from the fault of the workmen, but arises from the fact that he cannot get work from his employer?—Our hands, generally speaking, have plenty of yarn to go on with; in fact, we always give it out to them on the Saturday when they bring their work in, except occasionally, when we cannot get the yarn till the Monday morning, but, generally speaking, they have a sufficient quantity in hand to enable them to begin to work on the Monday.

3378. Is that a regular rule between you and your workmen, whether trade is good or bad?—Yes, it is a regular rule whether trade is good or bad; I always get the most work made when trade is bad; they will always make me more work when trade is bad than when it is good.

3379. Supposing a middleman spreads work, given out from a hosier for 100 frames, over an additional 50, from which 50 additional frames he would derive frame rent on his own account, could there be six days' work for all the persons thus employed?—Generally.

3380. But you would give out work, I imagine, for 100 frames; and supposing that the middleman, or bagman, or undertaker, or whatever he is, has 50 frames of his own, or 50 hired independent frames, in addition to the 100 you have, and you give out work for 100 frames, it is not unusual, is it, for the work which you have so given out for the 100 frames to be spread over one-third more?—Those that you refer to are all independent frames.

3381. I am supposing an instance in which 100 frames should be the property of the hosier, or, at all events, that the hosier should have them either as independent frames or as his own, but that they should be under his control; and I am supposing also that the undertaker should have, on his own account, an additional 50?—It would be of no use his having the additional 50, if he could not get employment for them.

3382. Is it an unusual thing, where work is given out sufficient for 60 frames, belonging to the hosier, and where the middleman has 30 frames of his own, for the work to be spread over the additional 30 frames, thereby diminishing the amount of work given out to each workman?—I do not think that is ever done.

3383. You do not think it is ever done?—I do not.

3384. Not by anybody?—I do not think it is; it is a case that has never come before me in a single instance.

3385. But if it were done (and there are witnesses who have said it is done) would not that account for framework-knitters in those instances not working on Mondays?—I do not think it is done at all.

3386. But supposing it were done, although you do not know that it is, that would account, would it not, for the workmen not working on Mondays?—I do not think it would make any difference at all.

3387. In slack times, can the workmen refuse to accept any terms that the middleman may please to offer them?—Yes; they will not work if they do not choose; we have not had so flat a time for several years as within the last six months.

3388. They will not work?—No.

3389. What will they do then?—I do not know; they will go to the union, I expect.

3390. Would they be able to receive parochial relief if they refused to work on terms too low for them to subsist on?—They do relieve them in a flat time, but not in a busy time; in a flat time they have had relief.

3391. Is it usual at the union to relieve able-bodied men who refuse to take work when it is offered to them?—If they know it they will not.

3392. And do they not generally inquire?—I do not think they do; they never inquire of us.

3393. Mr. *Mundy.*] Does not the relieving officer take measures to find out?—I do not know, I am sure; they never apply to us.

3394. *Chairman.*] Do you mean then that if a workman refuses, as he has

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the power of refusing work when it is offered to him, he can go to the union and there obtain relief?—I mean to say that if he cannot get work at one place he can at another, for there are always frames to let even in the flattest time; I have had frames to let myself in Leicester within the last six months, and I have frames to let now.

3395. You assert then that in the flattest times a workman has the power, if he pleases, of refusing to take any terms that may be offered to him, and can go to another person and get work?—Yes; he has the power of refusing, and of taking other work, if he thinks proper; this year, for instance, though, perhaps, one of the slackest six months we have had, there has always been other work, such as that made from narrow frames; they will not work in narrow frames; I have had some narrow frames still since Christmas; I could not get hands for them; they would sooner go to the union and get relief there than work them.

3396. You were asked a question on Tuesday no less than three times, I am sorry to say, as to this matter, with regard to Mr. Hanford?—Yes; I have the case here.

3397. There was a paper put in by Mr. Joseph Elliott, in his evidence (*the Paper referred to was shown to the Witness*); have you anything to say with regard to it?—I have seen this statement before; I can only answer it by putting in another statement of the earnings.

3398. You know Mr. Hanford, do you not?—Of course I do; he has worked to us for a great many years.

3399. Is the statement that he made there correct?—No; not a word of it.

3400. Not a word of it is correct?—No; the stoppages for each frame are, rent, 1 *s.*; standing, 3 *d.*; taking in, 3 *d.*; winding, 6 *d.*; which are his charges.

3401. Then you altogether deny that there is any truth whatever in that statement?—I will give you a statement which we got from their own hands individually.

3402. You altogether deny the truth of that statement which was put in by Mr. Elliott?—There is no truth whatever in it; we went to the hands themselves, when we saw this charge, to know what they could do, and what they could get. Now this is their own tale. I can give no other answer than this; we went direct to the men; not to Joseph Hanford.

3403. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Did you take the names of the men that are given as A, B, C, and D, and so on?—No, I did not take them in that way; I took their proper names.

3404. Do you give the names of the parties who are represented as A, B, C, and D?—I know nothing about that, but we went to every hand employed by Mr. Hanford.

3405. *Chairman.*] This paper was put in in consequence of a question which was put to Mr. Joseph Elliott, No. 1782 in the evidence; he was asked "Whether he had any other paper"? and he said, "Yes; a list of 12 men was given to me by a middleman, and the average earnings, after the deductions are made, amount to 5 *s.* 7 *d.* net money; the average net earnings of 12 shirt hands amount to 11 *s.* 4 *d.*;" therefore, the statement of Mr. Joseph Elliott is, that this account was given to him by Mr. Hanford?—Yes; if you will be kind enough to let me read over the paper I produce, I think it will throw some light upon the question. (*The Witness delivered in the Paper referred to.*)

Vide Appendix.

3406. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You employ Mr. Hanford as a middleman, do you not?—Yes.

3407. And the statement which you have now put in shows the average wages, with the particulars thereof, of one week's work, in two shops employed through Mr. Hanford?—No, one shop; the other is in another part of the town.

3408. Mr. Hanford's average was, how much?—Seven shillings and twopence-halfpenny.

3409. The other was the earnings of workmen employed in another shop through another agent?—Yes.

3410. What is that gentleman's name?—John Woodward.

3411. What is the average of that?—Eight shillings, and there are two or three women there.

3412. Mr. *Gardner.*] Then there is a difference between your statement and that put in by Mr. Elliott, with respect to Mr. Hanford's shop, of 1 *s.* 7 ½ *d.*?—Yes; that which I have put in is a correct statement.

3413. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You do not know whether the two statements apply to the same week, do you?—The statement which I have put in refers to no week in particular; they stated what they were doing.

3414. Will you explain what you mean when you say they stated what they were doing?—We went to the first man, John Collins, and said, "How many can you make per week, and how many do you make per week;" and according to what he stated it was put down.

3415. A party has given in a statement of the earnings of a particular week?—I do not know anything about that particular week.

3416. You have not inquired as to any particular week, have you?—No; I inquired what they can do, and what they do do, in fact.

3417. Then you are unable to say whether the statement, which you have put in, is correct or incorrect as regards some other particular week than that in which you were there?—The paper put in by Mr. Elliott is not at all correct for any week, unless the workmen had been idling their time away; I cannot tell anything about that.

3418. Mr. *Gardner.*] What you mean to say is, that they must have earned more in any one week if they had chosen to work?—Yes.

3419. *Chairman.*] Did I correctly understand you to say, when you were examined on Tuesday last, that the middlemen you employ are above all suspicion, with regard to their statements?—No; I did not say that all of them were; some might not be; but what I said was, that the parties I named were above suspicion.

3420. I thought you said that the middlemen you employed, were all above suspicion?—No; I do not think they are all above suspicion; I did not include the whole of them.

3421. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I think you have said that you have a thousand frames of your own employed in Leicester, and the villages round it?—More than a thousand.

3422. And you employ also a thousand independent frames?—Yes.

3423. From which you derive no benefit whatever, as far as rent is concerned?—None whatever.

3424. What rent per week do you receive for each of the thousand frames belonging to yourself?—A shilling generally; there are some few odd frames that I let for 6 *d.*, and some few that I let for 9 *d.*, but that is under peculiar circumstances; the general charge is 1 *s.*

3425. What rent is charged for the thousand independent frames employed in your manufacture?—I read a note the other day, when I was here, from Mr. Turner, in which he stated that he charged 10 *d.* rent, and a halfpenny in the shilling for carriage, bringing the work in and taking it out.

3426. That is, from 10 *d.* to 1 *s.* is charged for independent frames?—Mr. Lawrence, of Stoke Golding, charges 1 *s.* only, and does not charge the hand anything besides.

3427. But the average charge would be much about the same as that which is made for your own frames?—They charge 1 *s.*; there is no doubt about that.

3428. You are asked in Question No. 3272, "Do you agree with Mr. Biggs in the opinion he has expressed, that any interference, whether by the progress of steam machinery on the one hand, or legislation on the other, which interferes with the wrought hose branch of the trade, would throw a considerable number of the population out of employ?" and your answer was, "If they were to establish the net system, and we had not any interest in our machinery in flat times, I should not employ one of them." Is that so?—Yes.

3429. Then what is the inducement for you to employ the extra 1,000 independent frames you do employ, but from which you say you derive no pecuniary benefit?—For the purpose of getting a sufficiency of stock to supply our spring and autumn demand.

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3430. I am asking why, having that opinion, you employ these thousand independent frames from which you derive no benefit. I am now speaking of narrow frames?—They make a particular kind of stocking, which, generally speaking, I make for the season; we accumulate a very large stock of them to supply the wants of the season.

3431. You have said that you would not employ a narrow frame at all, unless you derived pecuniary benefit and advantage from the rent thereof; and I now ask you why, if that be so, you emply a thousand independent narrow frames, exclusive of your own?—I am not aware that I said such a thing.

3432. I thought you repeated it just this moment; however, I will pass on from that; is the charge of 1 *s.* a week regulated by the value of the frame?—No.

3433. Do the best, the middling, and the inferior frames, all pay the same rent?—They do.

3434. Is the rent regulated by the amount of goods produced by each frame?—No; except it is a wide frame.

3435. I am speaking of narrow frames; do the adult and the child employed at the frame both pay the same rent?—Every one pays the same rent if they can work in the frame and do anything; a frame will go longer, of course, with an experienced and quick hand, than it will supposing it to be worked by a child.

3436. You have said that you never take full rent, unless the frame has been fully employed; is that so?—I do not; I do not know that there is a single instance of it. I always give them out as much work as they can do.

3437. You neither take it directly nor indirectly, either yourself or through the middleman?—Neither directly nor indirectly.

3438. Do I then understand you to mean, that when it happens that a hand only manufactures half the usual quantity of goods, a part only of the 1 *s.* rent is charged?—We give them as much work as they can do, and take the full rent; for my part, I do not believe in half work.

3439. But suppose a man brings in half work only, what should you do in that case?—Why, then, I should take the rent.

3440. You would do that upon the supposition that it was his own fault, would you?—Yes, upon the supposition that it was his own fault. If I give out sufficient material, and the man loiters away his time, or keeps Saint Monday, &c., I should take the full rent.

3441. Is rent charged when a workman is sick?—I do not charge it; I could bring hundreds of notes to show it, if that were all.

3442. But I want to know from you whether the rent is charged generally in such cases; you must bear in mind that we are asking these questions of you as an experienced man in the trade; they are questions which refer to the trade generally, and relate to matters which come within your own knowledge especially, although they may not exactly apply to your own conduct; we are questioning you with regard to the trade generally?—Well, I cannot speak about what other people in the trade do; I really know nothing of other people's business, for I never make inquiry about it.

3443. You, having been connected with the trade now for 30 years, I wish to ask you this: do you or do you not believe that rent is frequently charged when the workman is sick?—I cannot answer that question.

3444. Do you give out your own yarn, and take in the hose, in many cases?—I assist.

3445. What proportion of your business do you take in and give out at your own warehouse to and from the workmen?—The work is taken in at Granby-street; the factory is another thing altogether.

3446. I am not speaking of a factory, but of narrow frames?—It is taken in at Granby-street, and nowhere else.

3447. You are drawing a distinction between work done for you through a middleman, and that which you take in and give out direct from and to the men at your warehouse?—We take all the work in at Granby-street.

3448. Do you take in and give out work direct to any portion of the frame-work knitters?—We do.

3449. To

3449. To what proportion do you think you do that in your business?—I should think half, or more than half; that is, to the workman and his family.

3450. Then you have a very thorough knowledge of what is passing among your own men as regards their work?—I ought to have.

3451. Have you any means of ascertaining whether the plan which you yourself pursue with your workmen is pursued between your middleman and the workmen?—I have no means whatever of knowing that; as I have said before, I have more than half that work to me direct; men that have their own families, or probably another individual or so working with them.

3452. Will you have the goodness to state to the Committee what the charges are, besides this charge for rent, which are stopped out of the wages of the workmen in the narrow frames?—In Mr. Turner's case, as I have stated, it was a halfpenny in the shilling, and he charged tenpence rent; but I always charge, (when the parties work direct to me), the shilling, and they pay their own carriage, or they bring their work in themselves every Saturday.

3453. Then, besides the rent, a halfpenny in the shilling is all the charge?—Yes, or perhaps three halfpence a dozen, but there are a variety of modes.

3454. Are there any other charges?—No.

3455. Those, then, are all the charges that you deduct?—I only charge 1 *s.*; I do not charge anything else; they can either send their work or bring it in themselves, just as they think proper.

3456. Do you not know that in some of the villages there are more than three or four frames collected in shops built by the middlemen?—I do not know any shops of that kind; the workmen generally have their frames in a small room adjoining their house, where they have perhaps half a dozen.

3457. *Chairman.*] That is what you call a shop, is it not?—Yes, a small shop.

3458. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you not know that there are places built for the purpose perfectly independent of the house in which the workman lives?—No, I do not know that.

3459. You never saw them?—I have never seen any in the country villages.

3460. *Chairman.*] Are there not shops which are occupied by middlemen independent of families in which journeymen and other parties work together? In the places in which I have been the frames have generally been in a small place that will hold perhaps as many as half a dozen. I have seen from two to half a dozen frames put in a back place; you may call it by what name you like, but perhaps, more properly speaking, it is a small shop.

3461. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Your statement is, that in certain shops, some half-dozen frames, perhaps, are collected by a middleman?—No; not by a middleman, but by the head of the family; that man possibly may have a journeyman, or he may have, perhaps, one or two other people, besides his own family, working in his shop.

3462. *Chairman.*] Does not the middleman often take rent for the standing of the frame?—For wide frames.

3463. And is not that the case also with respect to the narrow frames?—The work is generally given out, as it were, at their own homes; there may, perhaps, be an undertaker, such a man as Mr. Turner, or Mr. Lawrence, who will take a quantity of yarn from our warehouse, or from the warehouses of others, and pass it in the same way as we would do to small shops.

3464. Does he not take rent for the standing of the frames?—No; he has nothing to do with the standing, because they are not on his own premises.

3465. But does not the undertaker take a shop on his own account, in which he puts so many workmen, who pay him for the standing of their frames, as well as the frame rent?—The parties I was alluding to, such as Mr. Turner and Mr. Lawrence, who own a great many frames, take the yarn out as we should do from the worsted maker; they then give it out, either to single hands or to parties having two or three frames in their own houses, or in a small shop adjoining their house, but there is nothing charged for standing.

3466. Then you do not know of any instances in which standing is paid for to the middleman for frames?—Not in narrow frames; I do not know it myself.

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3467. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you believe that such a practice exists?—I do not know; I cannot speak to anything I do not know.

3468. Have you never heard that the middlemen do, in point of fact, charge for standing-room in these small shops?—I do not know whether that is their custom or not.

3469. Did you never hear of it?—No; I never did.

3470. Do you know that they charge for gas?—They have no gas in the country villages.

3471. But in places where they have gas, do they charge for it, or do they not?—I dare say in such a place as Hanford's they do; but I do not know whether it would be gas or oil.

3472. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do they charge for one or the other?—I do not think they do; the paper which I have put in says nothing about it.

3473. *Chairman.*] But that statement does say that standing is paid for narrow frames?—Yes, in the town; but I was alluding to country villages; in the town it is done, but I do not think it is done in the country villages; it may be done in some parts of the country, but the frames are generally in small shops, or in the houses of the workmen; and I prefer employing the families.

3474. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] In Leicester, is it customary for the middlemen to charge for standing room?—Yes.

3475. For oil?—Yes.

3476. For gas?—I do not know.

3477. *Chairman.*] For needles?—Yes.

3478. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have any instances occurred, within your own knowledge, in which rent has been paid when a frame has only been partially employed?—I am not aware.

3479. Do I understand you to say no instances of the kind have occurred within your knowledge?—Not that I am aware of.

3480. Is rent taken when a workman, through sickness, is unable to work?—Not that I am aware of.

3481. Did you ever hear of that being done?—No.

3482. If it had been stated that you yourself had taken rent for weeks together when a workman was sick, you would say that such a statement was perfectly untrue?—It is untrue.

3483. Did you know a workman of the name of James Goodman, living in Alcander-street, Leicester, who used to work for you, and who died in the month of May 1854?—We never had a man of that name, that I know of; I should have recollected the name, I think, if we had; we had a Mrs. Goodman who worked to us.

3484. Do you remember his widow subsequently working to you, who died on the 28th March in this year?—Yes, I recollect her; it is many years since the husband worked to us.

3485. Had she one of your frames employed for seven weeks previous to her death?—She had; and they paid what they liked for rent; it was generally about 6*d.* a week that they paid for rent.

3486. Do you remember the daughter bringing home the goods three days after the death of her mother, on the 31st of March, seven weeks' rent being then due to you?—I do not recollect that.

3487. You do not recollect the daughter bringing home the goods?—I do not.

3488. Then if she states that she brought them to yourself, that statement would not be correct?—I cannot say; she might bring them for anything I know. I really have no knowledge of the circumstance at all; how is it likely that I should, when we have such a multitude of business to attend to?

3489. Do you remember at all the value of the work that was done?—I do not.

3490. Do you remember that there were seven weeks' frame-rent due?—I do not recollect anything about it.

3491. Did you in this instance stop 7*s.*?—I cannot tell that.

3492. And did you give the girl 4*s.* 4*d.* out of 11*s.* 4*d.*, telling her that that was the money due to her, although she told you that her mother had been sick

sick for seven weeks, and had only been buried then three days?—I know nothing of the circumstance, so I really cannot tell anything about it; owing to the multitude of business we have to do on a Saturday, we can scarcely pay attention to anything.

3493. *Chairman.*] You would be able to ascertain how the fact was by referring to your books, would you not?—I should.

3494. Mr. *Ingham.*] You have stated, as I understand you, that you never, so far as you know, charged rent to a person who was sick at the time, and who had been sick for seven weeks; I suppose that if you had done so you would recollect the circumstance, would you not?—Very likely I should; but I do not recollect it; when work is brought in by our workpeople, we take it in, and, in fact, try to despatch them as soon as we can.

3495. Mr. *Gardner.*] How many people on an average have you to settle with on a Saturday?—A great many.

3496. Can you give any idea of the number?—No; we commence at seven o'clock in the morning, and finish at five o'clock in the afternoon.

3497. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But a circumstance such as that to which your attention has been called, would be of so extraordinary a nature, that if it had occurred it would be brought to your recollection by my naming it now, would it not?—I do not recollect it all.

3498. Are you of opinion that the owner of a frame is justified in taking full rent, when only a sufficient quantity of material to make half a dozen hose is given out?—No, he is not justified in taking it, let him be who he will; and if it it is done by our firm, then I know nothing about it; it certainly is not justifiable.

3499. Have you ever in any way affirmed, either publicly or privately, that such a system was justifiable?—I do not understand you.

3500. Have you ever stated that you thought such a system was justifiable?—No, neither publicly nor privately; what I have stated is, that if I give out a sufficient quantity of material for a week's work, and they only bring in half a dozen, I know they have been neglecting their work, and I then take the rent.

3501. You say you know, then, that they have been neglecting their work; would you inquire whether they had been neglecting their work; whether they had been sick, or what had been the reason of their bringing in less than the proper quantity; is it your custom to inquire into the reasons?—We never inquire; if we did, we must have a party purposely to make inquiries of that kind; but if it is a satisfactory case, we always allow it.

3502. But you say you never inquire; supposing a workman brought in half a dozen instead of three dozen hose, would you inquire what was the reason?—The fact is, that I would not employ such a hand; I cannot bear those hands.

3503. But you have not given me an answer to my question; I want to know whether, under those circumstances, you would make inquiry or not?—Yes; I frequently make inquiry for the purpose of knowing how it is that the hand has done no more work, and the answer they make me is, that they have been attending to their garden, making a holiday, or something of that sort.

3504. Mr. *Gardner.*] But you give out the full quantity of work?—The full quantity of work; and if they do not do it, then it is their own fault.

3505. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] And in those cases you think you are justified at all times in taking the rent?—Yes, if I know they have been well.

3506. But do you inquire?—I do not always; we have not many single frames; there are generally two or three, or three or four together.

3507. Mr. *Wickham.*] Knowing what your custom is, they would be ready enough to say they had been unwell, if they had been so?—Yes.

3508. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Would there be any difficulty in ascertaining the total amount of charges made against the workmen, if the hosiers and middlemen so desired?—I do not think there would be any difficulty in ascertaining it.

3509. In your last examination you said that one workman made three dozen hose in a week, and another made only two dozen, through indolence or want of skill, and you said that you saw a difficulty in paying the same rate

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per dozen to one as to the other, the charges being the same; will you be good enough, if you please, to explain that?—There is no difficulty in it now; the thing is as simple as A, B, C. If a man brings in two dozen, we pay him at once for two dozen.

3510. Why would it not be equally easy under a net system?—I will give you my ideas respecting that; it would be attended with such a vast amount of confusion, of which it would be an impossibility to conceive, more especially those who are not thoroughly conversant with the trade of the town. It would create so many dissensions, not only between the manufacturer and his workmen, but also amongst the workmen themselves; for, from what I have learnt from the hands, there are not one-half of them who are favourable to the proposed change, because they know that the alteration from the one system to the other would not, according to the evidence given before the Committee, benefit them in the least, in a pecuniary point of view, but sooner be an injury. In the first place, a workman is in no way injured by holding a frame subject to a moderate payment for its use; for were frame-rents to be abolished by law, his earnings would be decreased by the amount the manufacturer would be necessarily compelled to charge him with, though indirectly, for the outlay or investment of his capital, and the expenses of keeping that machinery in repair; for it would be an impossibility to charge these expenses upon the manufactured article, because their value, like all other commodities, is determined by the great rule of supply and demand. Secondly, was the manufacturer to be restricted by law from obtaining a return for the capital expended in such machinery, he would be compelled to obtain it by reducing the cost of his goods, or, in other words, by paying a lower rate for the labour of the operatives, by which means the quick hands would be the greatest sufferers, and the slow hands also would be no gainers. As an instance, we will say A., who is a slow hand, makes two dozen of hose per week, at 3 *s.* 6 *d.* per dozen; B., who is a medium one, three dozen; and C., who is a good and quick hand, four dozen; their respective earnings, when the rent is deducted, would be 6 *s.*, 9 *s.* 6 *d.*, and 13 *s.* Now, under the net system we should give for these hose 3 *s.* per dozen; consequently A. will get his 6 *s.* still, B. 9 *s.*, and C. 12 *s.*, the two latter being respectively losers by 6 *d.* and 1 *s.* It would be an impossibility for us to take a medium hand's work as an average for the stoppage of rents, because a slow hand injures a frame as much or more than a quick and good hand will. It will be seen that it is to a manufacturer's advantage to employ the quickest hands; so that the system, carried out, would immediately throw out of work all the slow ones, such as young, old, and infirm people, and women, and would be, consequently, highly detrimental to that part of the operatives. Thirdly, as the frames are not under the control and oversight of the owner, he has no guarantee that they will not be used to make goods for others, to his own injury; whereas, under the present system, if they should be so employed, he still receives rent for their wear and tear. Should, however, the present system be adopted, it would lead to the withdrawal of the frames from the country to the town, to be placed in factories, the buildings and rents of which would have to come from the earnings of the workman by a second reduction in the price of his goods; whereas frames are now, for the most part, in the houses of the hands, at no expenses in the shape of rents, and they can be worked at the option of the operative, who may probably have a piece of ground which greatly assists him towards the maintenance of himself and family; though it is far from my opinion that narrow frames could ever be introduced into factories; in fact, it would be an impossibility. Again, with respect to a running list of prices for one article, as was mentioned by Mr. Biggs at his examination, such could not be carried out by those who employ, like ourselves, upwards of 2,000 hands; for supposing a hand makes three dozen of hose at 4 *s.* present prices, he will be paid at the rate of 3 *s.* 8 *d.* under the net system. Another makes two dozen of the same kind, for which he will receive, at the same rate, 3 *s.* 6 *d.*; and a third one dozen, for which he will receive 3 *s.* Such a system would necessitate such a multiplicity of prices that it would cause the greatest amount of confusion possible, more especially to larger manufacturers, who make several hundred sorts. It would, in fact, be an impossibility for us to continue our business, as all system would be entirely destroyed.

3511. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is that a statement of your views?—Yes.

3512. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You say it would create very much confusion?—It would create confusion in every department; the prices of 3 *s.* and 4 *s.* look simple enough; but you must go from 11 *d.*, 1 *s.*, 13 *d.*, 14 *d.*, 15 *d.*, and up to six or seven shillings; and then there would be the diversity of hands. You have your slow, medium, quick, good and bad hands; and besides that, you have all sorts of machinery, good, bad, and indifferent. You could not get to any universal system very well; it would be an impossibility; and the more I look at it, the greater appears to me to be the difficulty; I cannot see my way clearly at all. Were such a Bill as that which has been suggested to come into operation, we should have to adopt one of two or three courses; one would be to take the rent in advance, another would be to give them a nominal price, or thirdly, to stop until it became inoperative.

3513. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you mean by giving them a nominal price?—Giving one price for all, both good and bad.

3514. *Chairman.*] An average price?—No; a nominal price.

3515. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you not mean that you would give one average price?—No; I should give a certain sum upon all sorts of goods.

3516. You say, that if a Bill were to pass for the abolition of frame-rents, you would have to take one of three courses: either to take the rent in advance, to give them a nominal price, or to stop until the Act became inoperative?—Yes.

3517. Mr. *Biggs.*] When you say "to stop," you mean to suspend business?—Yes.

3518. Mr. *Gardner.*] Now be kind enough to explain the second alternative?—I was going to say, that Mr. George Lawrence, when the other Bill, the Ticket Bill, came into operation, put down in every instance a shilling a dozen; he put that down upon the ticket, but he gave the workmen the usual price when the work came in.

3519. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Provided it were possible to introduce a net system, would you think it right to pay a skilled workman precisely the same price that you would pay to the unskilled or idle workman?—I should put down a nominal price for every individual if I carried out the ideas that I have just named, both as to good and bad hands.

3520. If one workman makes four dozen hose, another two dozen, and another one dozen, would you think it right, or would you think it wrong, that you should put a certain rate per dozen on the hose so made, and let the workmen receive in proportion to their industry or idleness?—If I found the Bill became inoperative, and that it did not work at all, I should adopt that plan.

3521. I will repeat my question until it is answered, if you please: if one workman makes four dozen hose, another workman two dozen, and another one dozen, would you think it right, or would you think it wrong, that you should put a certain rate per dozen on the hose so made, and let the workmen receive in proportion to their industry or idleness?—They would receive in proportion to their industry.

3522. And you would think that right?—Of course I should.

3523. Then what possible objection could you have to fixing a rate per dozen at which the workmen should bring in their work to you; the idle man would then be paid in proportion to his work, and the industrious man in proportion to his?—Of course, if I found that I could not carry out the net system, I must put down a certain price, but I should pay them according to what they did.

3524. But the tenor of your answers would lead us to suppose that you did not think it just to pay the good and industrious workman at the same rate per dozen as you paid the unskilled and idle?—I would not have the unskilled and idle at all; I would not employ them. It is the good workmen that I should employ, and not the others.

3525. Is there any good reason, save that of custom, why the middleman should not be paid by the hosier instead of by a deduction, as at present, from the wages of each workman?—We would not employ him; we should only weigh out yarn to him. We will say we want a certain quantity of hose made at such prices; he takes the yarn and employs the hands. We have nothing to do with his hands. We could not, therefore, adopt the plan that you suggest.

3526. It is true that under the present system you could not; but I ask whether

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whether there is any reason why a middleman may not be paid by the manufacturer rather than by the numerous workmen, by deductions from their wages?—It could not be done from my experience in the trade.

3527. Will you tell us why?—I do not know that I can; that is all I know about it, that it could not be done.

3528. Would not the hosier be better able than a needy workman to make a just contract with the middleman?—They do make the contract already.

3529. Would not the hosier be able to make a better contract with the middleman than the workmen are at present enabled to do?—I cannot tell that.

3530. You have not considered that question?—No.

3531. At what age is a child able to work at a frame?—I cannot tell you that. I have two or three cases here from Earl Shilton: in one case Michael Pickering makes three dozen at 6*s.* 9*d.* weekly, and his son, who is 11 years old, makes two dozen socks, at 3*s.* 3*d.* a dozen; the rent is 1*s.*, which leaves it 5*s.* 6*d.* I have been giving my errand boy in the warehouse 3*s.*; he is between 13 and 14, but I am now going to give him 4*s.* a week, which will be then 1*s.* 6*d.* per week less than the boy who works in the frame.

3532. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would that boy be an average hand?—I should think not; I never knew so young a child put to a frame as this one, I think.

3533. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] At 11 years of age?—Yes.

3534. What is the usual age at which children begin to work at frames?—I cannot tell,

3535. Twelve or thirteen?—I cannot tell that.

3536. Is it customary to put children in frames at 11, 12 and 13 years of age?—I dare say it is; I have seen very young hands footing, and doing other light work.

3537. At what ages are children employed in winding?—That I cannot tell.

3538. Did you never see them so employed?—Yes, I have seen them winding, but I have not noticed very young children; children of eight, nine, or ten years of age will wind.

3539. Have you seen children of the ages of five, six, and seven, congregated together in numbers with one overlooker, a female?—No, I never saw such a thing in my life.

3540. What is the most youthful age you have seen?—I have only seen them in their own houses when they have been old enough to wind a little worsted; they do it all among themselves, generally speaking, the children wind for their parents when they are old enough.

3541. But is it not customary for children to meet together in numbers?—No; I never saw a gathering of that sort in my life.

3542. It is not customary, then, for children to meet together to wind at the ages of five, six, seven, and eight?—I know nothing about it, having never seen any thing of the kind.

3543. Then, of course, you cannot tell me how many hours a day these little children work?—No; I know nothing about it.

3544. Nor what wages they earn?—No; I was not aware that any of them were put to work so young.

3545. You know a good deal of the frame-work knitters in the various districts round Leicester; is it their habit to send their children to school?—Some of them do, though there are many who do not.

3546. Is not the fact of children being able to earn small sums at an early age, in the frame and in winding, a great inducement to their parents not to send them to school?—Perhaps so.

3547. Mr *Cheetham.*] Do not the necessities of the parents compel them to act as they do?—Sometimes, though perhaps not in all instances; it depends a great deal upon the parents whether the children are sent to school or not; there are, generally speaking, Sunday-schools in country villages where they can send them if they think proper.

3548. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you not think it exceedingly desirable that the children, instead of being so employed in the way you have described, should be sent to school till they are ten or eleven years of age?—My idea with respect to the education of children is, that they ought to be compelled to go to school at certain hours of the day, from a certain age to a certain age.

3549. Has

3549. Has there been any attempt made, so far as you know, to enforce such a regulation?—No, not that I am aware of.

3550. Have any pains been taken among any class of persons, to overcome the difficulty which at present exists, owing to these people, from their poverty, or whatever the cause may be, retaining their children at home at very tender ages to work at frames, rather than send them to school?—I am not aware that there have.

3551. But you think it exceedingly desirable, do you not, that some means should be taken to ensure their being sent to school?—I think they ought to be sent to school from a certain age to a certain age.

3552. *Chairman.*] Do you mean to say you think their parents should be compelled to send them to school, though a loss would be incurred by the loss of their work?—They have the Sunday-schools; and if a certain hour, or a couple of hours every day were appointed, it would be a very great advantage.

3553. In times of distress, when the parents would suffer by the loss of their children's work, would you think it right that their parents should be compelled by law to send them to school?—That is a difficult question.

3554. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You were good enough to say in your last examination, that you would produce a book containing the cost and charges, and so forth, of your frames; have you that book here?—No, I have not; it is a large book, and I did not know that the Committee wanted it to day; they did not state that they wanted it.

3555. Would you have any objection to give the Committee, for their own information, the cost and charges and the proceeds of 1,000 frames, for seven years?—It would be impossible for me to do that; we have not taken the particulars there; it is a system that we have only adopted very lately; we have put down the cost of the frames generally, and the repairs; but that has only been done lately.

3556. And the amount of rent received?—No; we do not put that down; these frames are frequently changing hands, and there are always some standing idle, which we are either not able to employ, or cannot get hands for.

3557. You will see that isolated statements, whatever they refer to, standing totally alone, are not statements on which we could so well rely, as we could on the average of a large number of frames, from such men as yourself, who know the cost, the expense of repairs, and the receipts thereof?—We have no receipts; we merely enter the expense of moulding, and in many instances that is omitted, though we have been more particular recently.

3558. How recently?—Since we parted with our late bookkeeper.

3559. How long may that be?—Nearly 12 months.

3560. Could we have it for 12 months as a guide?—It would be no guide at all.

3561. Then you really cannot give us the amount of cost of those frames, the charges or expenses incurred upon them, or the amount received in the shape of rent?—We know what the frames cost us, and we know what they will cost repairing.

3562. I want you to answer my question?—We never kept a debtor and creditor account of a frame.

3563. I will repeat my question; then you really cannot give us the amount of the cost of those frames, the charges or expenses incurred upon them, and the amount received in the shape of rent?—We cannot give an exact statement.

3564. Then will you tell me how you came to state, on a former occasion, that you gave us the average cost of the repairs of 1,000 frames?—We gave you the average of five frames as nearly as we could possibly get at it.

3565. What means did you take to get at it?—We knew from experience how long they would go.

3566. Then it was not really the cost of those frames?—It is an average, as far as we can judge.

3567. All I want to ascertain, is the validity or invalidity of that statement; whether it was taken from anything real or not?—Yes, it was taken from something real; we know what we give for a frame; we know how long a frame will go, and what is the average rent of it; we know the moulds that will be required, and we know from experience the expenses that those frames will cost, as well as if every thing had been in black and white.

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3568. I have not the slightest doubt of that; but you told us before that you would give us the average of 1,000 frames, and now I understand you to say you are giving us the result of your experience and not the average of 1,000 frames?—It is the result of our experience; and I say that that statement is as correct as it is possible to be.

3569. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have been asked about the cost and the profit of frames?—I have been asked about how long they would go.

3570. Did you not on a former occasion say that you thought the profit of frames was 10 per cent?—Yes.

3571. You have been asked some questions on the subject of education; did I not correctly understand you to mean, that if children are now sent by their parents to work, when they ought to be sent to school, they ought to be protected by law?—Yes, I think they ought to be sent to school every day for a certain time.

3572. And that if the parents are either so indifferent, or so ignorant, as to be careless of the education of their children, the law ought to step in for the protection of the children?—That is my idea.

3573. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How would you deal with a case in which the parent is really in want of the earnings of the children?—That is a very difficult question to answer.

3574. Mr. *Biggs.*] Would you make up the difference out of the poor-rates?—It ought to be made up in some way.

3575. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think that the wages of the heads of families in the Leicestershire district are generally sufficient to enable them to dispense with the labour of their children, and to send them to school?—It depends entirely upon the families; some families will educate their children, and others are indifferent about education, and care nothing about it.

3576. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You do not agree in the opinion expressed by Mr. Biggs, that the physical condition of a very large number of the workmen employed in the manufacture of stockings is below that of a pauper?—No; their condition is not below that.

3577. He stated that the physical condition of 10,000 of the population of Leicester was below the average condition of paupers?—I do not agree with him in that.

3578. Mr. *Gardner.*] What Mr. John Biggs said was this: that they live on better fare in the union workhouse than they can on the proceeds of their own labour?—Yes; but we must not continually be keeping 10,000 people in the union.

3579. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You do not believe the fact to be as Mr. Biggs stated it?—No, I do not.

3580. Mr. *Biggs.*] You admit that there is a depression in the hosiery trade?—There has been the last six months.

3581. And that depression more particularly applies to the country frames and the wrought hose branch?—No; it is among the straight-down hose and sock hands.

3582. Is not the greatest amount of depression, as regards the comfort and condition of the operatives, to be found among the wrought hose branch?—The wrought hose branch is the worst paid.

3583. Do you consider that that arises from the system of frame-rents and charges?—No.

3584. Do you consider that the frame-rents and charges, deducted from the wages of the workmen, are, on the whole, excessive or not?—I think not, according to the use of the frames. I have now several frames in the shop that have not gone for more than two years.

3585. Do you consider that one cause of the depression which prevails is the change of fashion?—Yes.

3586. That another, and the principal cause, is the increase of machinery?—Yes.

3587. And that another is the foreign competition that exists in the trade?—Yes.

3588. You do not think that the system of frame-rents and charges is the cause

cause of the existing depression?—I do not think it is any cause whatever; there are not so many charges in the wrought hose branch; it is chiefly in the straight-down branch.

3589. I believe that no new narrow frames have been built within the last 30 or 40 years?—Yes; several have been built lately.

3590. Narrow frames?—Yes, within the last seven years.

3591. Will not the growth of the wide and round machinery have a tendency to prevent any increase in the number of narrow frames?—It will.

3592. Will not narrow frames have a natural tendency to decline and go out of use gradually, but to a great extent, in the course of time?—Yes.

3593. Without any Act of Parliament being passed on this subject?—Yes.

3594. And therefore the evil which is complained of will have a tendency to correct itself?—It will.

3595. There is an impression prevailing that the charges which are made are excessive. Is it not the fact, that whether a man works in a family, in a shop of his own, or through an undertaker, he has inevitably to incur charges either in time or in money?—Yes.

3596. The work which he brings into the warehouse cannot be produced by him without certain processes, in executing which he must either spend his own time or pay another to do it for him?—Just so.

3597. If he works in his own family, he has either to incur the cost of carriage or the cost of the time he would occupy in fetching and taking in his work?—Just so.

3598. He has to pay for seaming, and to find oil, soap, candles, needles, and so on, has he not?—Yes.

3599. And he has to find room for his frame in his own house?—Yes.

3600. That is inevitable, under any circumstances?—Yes.

3601. If he pays a middleman, he will have to pay money for standing room, carriage, seaming, oil, candles, and needles, which the middleman will find him?—Yes.

3602. The middleman will find him all those things cheaper than he can find them himself, will he not?—Of course.

3603. You think, in point of fact, that the charges are no cause of his distress?—Not in any way.

3604. And you think, do you not, that the intervention of a middleman is rather a convenience to the workman and the manufacturer?—Of course it is.

3605. The middleman can do these offices cheaper for the workman than he can do them himself?—Of course he can.

3606. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have been asked several questions as to whether you think it right or wrong that a system of rent and charges should prevail; by what principle are you, as a man of business, guided in making a contract with persons working to you?—When they called for work, or apply for frames in the first instance, I should ask them what sorts they were making, and if I wanted the work I should engage them.

3607. Do you, as a man of business, endeavour to get your labour at the lowest possible rate?—It depends upon circumstances; if a party comes round and shows us samples, and tells us what he can make the goods for, and we think the prices are about right, we give him out work. If we do not want the work done we do not of course employ him.

3608. I want to ask you whether, as a man of business, you endeavour to get your labour at the cheapest possible rate?—Of course I am obliged to do that, or else I should soon be in the "Gazette."

3609. Is it safe, or possible, in fact, to carry on business upon any other principle?—It is not safe.

3610. Suppose a man chooses to give his workmen more than the market price for their labour, that which he gives beyond the market price is in the nature of a charitable gift, is it not?—Yes; he would soon go to ruin if he did that.

3611. You are aware that it is the opinion of some gentlemen, that by altering the mode of paying wages in Leicestershire, the amount of the earnings of the workmen would be increased; is that your opinion?—Oh, dear, no; that would be impossible.

3612. You say that a mere legislative enactment, altering the mode in which the

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the payment of wages in Leicestershire is made, would afford no relief to the workmen?—No; you might as well try to make water run up-hill, or stop the flow of the tide, or regulate the weather.

3613. Mr. *Biggs.*] I think you said you should adopt one of three courses; will you explain to the Committee the particulars of the courses you would adopt in the event of an Act of Parliament being passed suppressing frame-rents?—The net system could never be established, on account of the multiplicity of all sorts of hands. The only thing you could do, to carry on your business in the regular way, would be to take the rent beforehand.

3614. You are aware that if an Act of Parliament suppressing frame-rents should be passed, it would make it illegal to take that rent in any form; do you mean that if such an Act of Parliament were passed, you would venture to take rent at all?—I should take it indirectly.

3615. You would take care that you would not be out of pocket?—Yes.

3616. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it your opinion that no Act of Parliament can prevent frame-rent from being taken?—It is impossible; as a man of business, I will defy any man to carry on business without adopting a regular system.

3617. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you say rent, do you mean rent admitting of profit on the capital and expenses?—I mean the present rent of 1 *s.* a frame on account of the wear and tear, and its not being under our own control.

3618. Mr. *Biggs.*] You would not adopt the present rent system, but would take the rent in advance?—That is what I mean.

3619. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of the privilege that the law gives to a workman with respect to the recovery of wages by summary process?—I am not aware of it; but it would not do for us manufacturers to be always litigating about these matters; we might as well shut up shop at once.

3620. Are you not aware that a workman has the power of recovering his wages by a summary process, which power does not exist with regard to other debts?—Yes, they have that power.

3621. By a summary process before a magistrate?—Yes.

3622. Supposing a workman to endeavour to recover his wages by that summary process, and it were urged, as an answer to his claim, that there was something due from him to his employer, which was not the subject of inquiry, would not that claim of the employer, if admitted, practically defeat the claim of the workman?—I am not aware.

3623. Suppose a workman were to proceed against his employer by that summary process for the recovery of his wages, and the employer were to say, "There is a sum due to me from the workman on account of frame-rent?"—I dare say there would not be any bargain; it would be understood beforehand what I, as the employer, claimed, and it would be paid over to me at once without any more ceremony about the matter; that would be thoroughly understood between the workman and me.

3624. Does not that practically amount to a complete defeat of the privilege which is given in ordinary cases to a workman to recover his wages by summary process?—No; I am not aware of that.

3625. You have spoken of the natural right that a frame-owner has to frame-rents; is there not also a natural right on the part of a workman to be paid his wages?—Yes, of course there is.

3626. And is not that right as sacred, and ought it not to be as much under the protection of the law as the other of which you have spoken?—Equally so.

3627. Mr. *Ingram.*] Of course, if a person summons you for the non-payment of wages, it is only for the balance that may be due to him that you are summoned; have you ever been summoned for the non-payment of wages?—I have been summoned once for a disagreement; some dispute.

3628. About wages?—Yes.

3629. Of course, when that was the case, you endeavoured to show that there was a counter-debt due to you from the party by whom you were summoned, and he would get nothing but the balance found to be due to him?—Yes.

3630. How does that defeat the law; you have to pay the balance?—Of course I do.

3631. Suppose you are summoned for the non-payment of what was due to the

the man for six dozen pair; should you have the power of charging him, as against that, with any arbitrary amount you pleased for frame-rent?—No.

3632. You could only charge him frame-rent to such an extent as was actually due?—Just so.

3633. You have no discretion to augment that charge in order to meet the charge which he makes for the balance which he alleges to be due to him on account of wages?—No, certainly not.

3634. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have stated that you are the owner of machinery which is capable of producing stockings at 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a dozen. I think that was your statement?—Yes; wrought hose.

3635. In answer to Question No. 3253, you state that you are enabled to produce stockings off those frames at 1 *s.* 10 *d.*; that is 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a dozen?—Yes.

3636. And you described those stockings as fashioned?—A complete wrought stocking.

3637. What is the comparative value to the purchaser of those stockings as compared with the stockings made on the narrow frame, regular wrought hose?—Just the same.

3638. Just the same?—Just the same in every respect.

3639. Then you are not of opinion with Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Biggs, that there is no wide machinery that could produce stockings equal to the ordinary wrought hose?—When they get them to perfection; the great improvement in machinery that is going on will make better work than the present system of wrought stockings with narrow frames.

3640. I suppose those stockings have to be sewn together afterwards?—Of course they are seamed like any other stockings.

3641. You can effect that, can you not; you can make a selvage?—As beautiful a selvage as ever you saw in your life.

3642. And the same stockings made in a common frame would cost 3 *s.* 9 *d.*, would they not?—Yes, 90 leads.

3643. That is rather more than double, is it not?—Yes.

3644. But still you are employing 2,000 narrow frames?—We are.

3645. How comes it that, if you can produce stockings at so much cheaper a rate from other machinery, you continue to employ so large a number of narrow frames?—This is the reason; we have not had this machinery long; not above two months.

3646. It is quite a new discovery?—Quite a new thing; it is the most improved system that has been out yet, both in its movements and everything else; if it were not so, we could not produce a stocking at 1 *s.* 10 *d.* equal to one at 3 *s.* 9 *d.*

3647. Then, in fact, the whole trade in narrow frames may be said to be doomed?—It is doomed.

3648. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And is not the object you have now attained, an object which has long been sought after by many capitalists?—Yes; they are adopting it now in Nottingham very generally; there are many frames at present at Nottingham that make wrought stockings.

3649. You stated at the last meeting of the Committee, that in your opinion, looking at the results already obtained from that machine, its use would so extend, as ultimately in a great degree to supersede the wrought frames?—Yes; only the wrought frames will not entirely go out of use, though there will probably be, as has been stated, some 10, or 20, or 30 thousand people, who must look to something else in the course of a few years besides working in stocking frames.

3650. Mr. *Wickham.*] You think that the new machines of which you have spoken will supersede the old ones?—They will supersede them entirely, or nearly so.

3651. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the nature of this machinery; is it rotary?—It is worked by steam power; the man who works it has nothing, or but very little to do; it would not answer our purpose to go and make men's, women's, and children's hose all alike; you must, with these new machines, make one sort all the year round.

3652. One machine will only make one size, and one description of hose?—

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One description; we have three sets, two leggers and a footer, and a small heeling frame; so that we have actually four frames; they are better narrowed than by the common stocking frame, and the workmanship is as even and regular as possible. The machinery must be kept in good order to produce a nice face upon the work.

3653. Mr. *Cheetham.*] But this machinery does not give you the facility of making rapid changes, does it?—No; not the same as the circular machine.

3654. Nor the same as the old narrow frame, so that, to a certain extent, certain branches of manufacture will always require the narrow frame?—To a certain extent.

3655. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is there a patent connected with your new machine?—No; there is no patent; there are several of them in use; we are the first that have had them in Leicester. I believe that Mr. Collins has altered one or two of his frames pretty much upon the same principle, but of course he has the benefit; he will not make them below the regular price, nor should I sell them below the regular price, because, in the course of two or three years, this machinery may decline in value, or some improvement upon it spring up.

3656. Does any house, but yours, employ them at Leicester?—No; but I believe that Mr. Collins is contemplating it; a great many straight-down frames in Leicester, at the present moment, are adopting what is called the turn-up lead.

3657. That is a lead affecting the shape in some degree?—Yes; making them as perfect as if they were made in wrought frames; and they will make three or four of these stockings at once, and some are doing so at the present moment.

3658. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That refers to the straight-down frame?—Yes; and they are making wrought hose even in them.

3659. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do I understand you to say that stockings made on this machine will stand washing to the same extent as wrought hose made in the usual way?—Yes, they will; they are just as good in every respect.

3660. They will not alter in shape?—Not in washing, except that they will shrink a little.

3661. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you sold any of the stockings produced by those frames?—Yes.

3662. And have the buyers objected to them?—No; no one could tell the difference.

3663. Mr. *Mundy.*] Have the buyers had time to test the result?—We can tell in a moment without any test; they go through the same process as a common stocking.

3664. Is it your own invention?—No.

3665. Where was the machine invented?—At Nottingham; it is worked extensively by some houses in Nottingham at the present time.

3666. How long has it been employed by them?—I should think for 12 months, or more.

3667. And do they continue to be satisfied with it?—Yes; the builder is making them as fast as he can.

3668. In Nottingham?—Yes; he is a very ingenious man; it is his own invention.

3669. Mr. *Ingham.*] But his invention is not protected by patent?—No.

3670. Mr. *Mundy.*] Is it only in Nottingham and Leicester that it is employed?—I cannot speak to that.

3671. It has not extended into Derbyshire at all?—I think not, unless Messrs. Ward have them; they may have them for anything I know.

3672. Sir *H. Halford.*] I think you have stated that you employed children and women, to a great extent, upon the narrow frames, as well as adults?—We do.

3673. Do you give out materials with reference to the number of frames, or with reference to the number of workmen?—They ask us how much they shall want, and we give the yarn out accordingly.

3674. You say you carry on your business through the intervention of middlemen?—One-half through middlemen and the other half the other way.

3675. You

3675. You state that you are able to give full employment to all your frames?—We give our hands as much as they like to do; we know about what they can work up, and of course we give it them, and when they bring their work in, if they keep much in hand we give them a little less out, and if they have brought in pretty near what we gave out to them, the same quantity is given out again, or a little more if they require it.

3676. If the head of a family has three or four frames, one worked by himself and the others by his wife and children, do you apportion the amount of materials given out to the capacity of the workman, or do you give it out with reference to the number of frames?—If a man can do three dozen a week we give him sufficient for that; if he can do 10 or 20 dozen a week we give him enough for that: we give it to them according to their wants.

3677. Then the material is given out with reference to the amount of work the workman is capable of doing?—Yes.

3678. But the full rent is always charged, without reference to the amount of work capable of being done upon the frame?—Full rent is always charged; if we agree for a certain sum in the shape of rent, or anything else, it is always charged when the work is brought in.

3679. So that the amount of rent bears a much larger proportion to the amount of work done, in the case of children, than it does in the case of able-bodied workmen?—I have generally found that the frames have been more knocked about by women and children than by experienced hands; I would sooner have quick hands working to me at any time, and I will give them as much as they can do.

3680. *Chairman.*] May I ask whether you have not advertised in the public papers, that it was your determination never to support a candidate for Parliament who would vote for governmental interference between a master and his workmen, whatever his opinions in other respects might be?—That is true enough; I did state that.

3681. And that you mean to abide by?—I mean to abide by it, at whatever cost.

3682. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why have you thought it necessary to advertise in the papers that you would not give your support to any candidate who was in favour of governmental interference between a master and his workmen?—Because Mr. Stallard attended a meeting of the manufacturers and published a false report in the journal, stating that I said, I would not do any business with a certain party because he was favourable to the net system.

3683. What considerations will induce you at any future election to withdraw your support from any gentleman who is in favour of governmental or legislative interference?—My objections are stated in the paper; I say I will not support any candidate who will interfere between master and man; I take that principle alone.

3684. Is that because you think that such interference would be injurious?—Yes; I think it would be injurious to both parties; I consider that master and man ought to make the best bargain they can with each other, and that no third person, whether it be an individual or whether it be law or an Act of Parliament, ought to interfere between them; those are my honest convictions. There is another case that was brought on by Mr. Elliott on his examination, which I think ought to be stated to the Committee.

3685. Is that contained in a paper which you would wish to put in?—Yes; but I should like to read the paper, because it will be better understood.

3686. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is it in relation to some charge made against yourself?—No; but it has relation to a charge which was brought against an individual. This person, James Mitchell, of Leicester, says, "Having been informed that Mr. Elliott has stated before the Committee of Inquiry on the frame-rent and stoppage question that I, in the employ of Mr. Derbyshire, earned 36*s.* a week, out of which I had deducted, in the shape of frame-rents and charges, 28 *s.*, leaving me 8 *s.* for my labour, is not correct." The note is directed to Mr. Derbyshire, who is a middleman. Then, at the back, there is this written: "Monday, May 21st.—Mitchell went this morning to Elliott and protested against the net system (this is the workman himself); Elliott told him that if he denied the statement that was made before the Committee it would be a bad job for them."

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3687. Mr. *Gardner.*] Elliott told the workman it would be a bad job for him?—Elliott told this man that it would be a bad job for them to show that their evidence was not worthy of notice. Then another statement was made, in which I was charged with giving short work out and taking full rent; now this case I should like to read to the Committee. I think it is very important, because the charge was made by this party: "Henry Palmer, aged 35, makes weekly one dozen and 10 pairs, at 3 *s.* 9 *d.*; which comes to 6 *s.* 10½ *d.*; the stoppage is 2 *s.* 1 *d.*, and the seaming 4 *d.* per dozen, leaving him 4 *s.* 2½ *d.* This man commences work at about 12 o'clock in the morning, and dines at a quarter past one; he returns to work at about three, and stops from six till seven or eight o'clock in the evening. His wife works in a factory." There is a woman in the same shop, named Sarah Poddington that makes 2 dozens and 2 pairs at 3 *s.* 9 *d.*, which comes to 8 *s.* 1½ *d.*; the stoppage is 2 *s.* 1 *d.*, and seaming 8½ *d.*; leaving 5 *s.* 4 *d.* This woman does more work than the man who works short time, and she is quite a cripple; working in the frame is the only thing she can do. Then here is another case, in which the owner of the shop is 73 years old, and his wife is 63; the wife comes to the warehouse, and attends to all the work; their week's earnings, after the stoppages, are 7 *s.* 7 *d.* They have that to keep house with. They make weekly 20 dozen at 3 *s.* 9 *d.*, which is 3 *l.* 15 *s.*; the rent being 7 *s.*, leaving 3 *l.* 8 *s.* Their average earnings are 7 *s.* 7 *d.* In this shop there is a boy 13 years of age; a man 67 years of age; also a cripple and a female. [*The Witness delivered in the Paper to which he had referred in his Evidence* (B.), *and also another Paper* (C.).]

Vide Appendix.

3688. Mr. *Ingham.*] Are these people in your own establishment?—No; but they work to us.

3689. How do you know that those statements are correct?—The person who gave them to me is a respectable man, and I can take his word. In that case of Elliott's I forgot to state the man's earnings. He said he only got 8 *s.* out of 36 *s.* I have the statement; the man works to Mr. Richard Angrave. On January the 6th his gross earnings were 1 *l.* 11 *s.* 6 *d.* Mr. Angrave did not take all the rent, but 6 *s.* 8 *d.*; it is 10 *s.* rent a week. It is a new frame, 120 inches wide, that would cost, I dare say, more than 100 *l.* Then, on the 13th of January, his earnings were 1 *l.* 15 *s*; on the 20th, 1 *l.* 17 *s.* 7½ *d.*; on the 27th, 1 *l.* 15 *s.* January the 6th, after stoppages, he received 15 *s.* 9 *d.* clear; on the 13th, 19 *s.* 3 *d.*; on the 20th, 1 *l.* 1 *s.* 10½ *d.*; and on the 27th, 19 *s.* 3 *d.*; so that the man from whom this note comes received, during the month, 3 *l.* 16 *s.* 1½ *d.* [*The Witness delivered in three Papers.*]

Vide Appendix.

John Sketchley, called in; and Examined.

John Sketchley.

3690. *Chairman.*] ARE you a Framework Knitter at Hinckley?—Yes.

3691. How long have you been in the trade?—Twenty-two years.

3692. Have you been working upon the frame-rent system?—Yes.

3693. Is that the general system on which trade is carried on at Hinckley?—I do not know any exception to that principle; it is the general rule.

3694. Do the workmen at Hinckley work chiefly to the warehouse, or do they work by bagmen or middlemen?—There are a few bagmen; I believe there are three or four in Hinckley, and that is all; the great bulk of the workmen work in small shops of two, three, four, five, and six frames each.

3695. And some of them work straight to the warehouse, do they?—Yes, I should say nearly one half of the male adults; at least that.

3696. Is there much complaint made in Hinckley of the stoppage made from the wages of the operatives?—I have been round to every workman in the town with the petitions that have been presented, and the complaint is general, both in Hinckley and in the villages.

3697. During the 22 years that you have been in the trade, has there been a general feeling against the stoppage of frame-rent and other charges from wages?—Not till within the last few years, perhaps four or five years; as wages have got lower we have found that rents have remained the same as they were when wages were higher, and consequently they bear more heavily on the workmen now than they did at former periods, when wages were higher.

3698. And is it the case that in consequence of that there has been more complaint?—Yes, there has been more complaint.

3699. Is

3699. Is it at all an uncommon circumstance in Hinckley to give out short work, and to take full frame-rent?—That is very frequently done.

3700. That you know of your own knowledge?—I do; I know it from my own experience.

3701. Is that the custom with the manufacturers generally in Hinckley?—In times of depression they will give out work on a Tuesday or Wednesday, and take full rent.

3702. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you say that of your own knowledge?—Yes.

3703. *Chairman.*] Is there any exception among the manufacturers of Hinckley to that system?—I believe Mr. Sills generally gives out work on Saturday or Monday; most of them during the last two or three months have given out work on the Tuesday or Wednesday; some make it a rule, for several weeks together, to give out work on the Wednesday, and to take full rent.

3704. I imagine that, supposing trade is brisk, there is not that delay in giving out work that there is when trade is slack?—When trade is good they generally give out work on the Saturday, when the work is taken in, or on the Monday morning.

3705. And as trade becomes more slack, does it happen that they give out the work later in the week?—It will be Tuesday, or Wednesday, in many cases.

3706. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have the workmen nothing in hand at this time?—Some of them may have a little, but not all.

3707. Have they enough to employ them on the Monday and Tuesday?—Not generally.

3708. *Chairman.*] What the Honourable Member means is, have they enough material in hand to keep them in employment till the next work is given out?—There may be a few odd workmen who have enough, but the generality of workmen have not. You may see them standing about by scores on Monday and Tuesday, having nothing to do.

3709. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Then they lose additional time by coming again on the Wednesday?—I have known people of Earl Shilton and Barwell take a three-mile journey to Hinckley on Monday, again on Tuesday, and then again on Wednesday, before they could get out their work; they would then take in the work on the Saturday, and have to pay full rent.

3710. And when they take in the work on the Saturday, do they lose the whole day?—Some of them will have to come at eight and nine o'clock in the morning, and they will not have any more work out that day.

3711. Mr. *Biggs.*] This, you say, applies to a flat time?—Yes.

3712. It is not uniformly the case?—As regards the taking in of work it is uniform.

3713. But the short supply of work, and taking full rent, only applies to slack times?—Yes.

3714. *Chairman.*] In good times there is a readiness, is there not, on the part of a manufacturer to give out work, and keep the framework-knitters in full employment?—So far as he can do so on the Saturday he will; what he cannot serve on the Saturday he will serve on the Monday.

3715. But when trade is slack, then they delay till later in the week to give out the work?—It is the object of some to delay the workmen as much as possible, so as to have as little work done as the hosier possibly can have.

3716. They receiving full rent for the frame?—Yes.

3717. That is invariably the case, is it?—Yes; there is a system which Mr. Woodcock of Hinckley, our largest manufacturer at the present time, adopted for several weeks: he gave what is termed half work, that is, he allowed a workman 4 *s.* first hand, and out of that he would take half rent; others will allow a workman rather more than half work, and then take what rent they think proper; but when they give out the work on Wednesday, and give what they call the stint, 8 *s.* a frame, or as much as the workman can do the rest of the week, then they will take full rent.

3718. In holiday weeks, in Christmas week, and in times of that sort, is it the custom for the manufacturers to give out any work?—It is the custom for them to do so, but there are exceptions. I have not received work on many

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occasions, and the next week I have had to pay two weeks' rent and charges; during last Christmas week Mr. Woodcock did not give out any work, nor did he take any work in, yet in the following week he took full rent for the two weeks.

3719. That is Mr. Woodcock of Hinckley?—Yes.

3720. He gave out no work for the Christmas week, considering it a holiday week, and at the close of the next week he took full rent for those two weeks; is that so?—Yes, full rent from all his hands.

3721. For one of which weeks he had given out no work?—None whatever.

3722. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know that of your own knowledge?—Yes.

3723. Who told you?—I went to a great number of his hands, and the other Witness who is here has evidence direct from some of them.

3724. *Chairman.*] You have spoken from your own experience of it?—Yes.

3725. Was it so with yourself?—Not with myself last Christmas. I did not work to Mr. Woodcock at that time.

3726. When sufficient work has not been given out to you for a week, have you ever had to pay rent for the whole week?—Yes.

3727. How long since did that happen?—Two, three, and four years since; it is of frequent occurrence in Hinckley; it excites great indignation on the part of the workmen; but it is of such frequent occurrence that it excites very little surprise.

3728. Will it be the same with regard to next week, Whitsun week, as it was in Christmas week?—Next week, probably, trade being bad, very little work will be given out by anybody; perhaps, on Thursday, some will be given out.

3729. And yet the full frame-rent will be taken?—Yes.

3730. With regard to Easter week, does the same practice prevail?—Every week in the year, that is considered a general holiday.

3731. Is Easter week one of them?—Yes.

3732. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is it known beforehand by the knitters that the rent will be so charged?—Yes.

3733. But they continue to work to the men who adopt that practice?—There is generally no other alternative; of course, if they could change the master they might leave one frame and go to another employer, but to do so is a serious loss to a workman.

3734. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is it not the custom at Hinckley, as well as at Leicester, to give the workmen two weeks' rent in the year, Christmas and Whitsuntide?—While he holds a frame he never has a day's rent given him; it always has been so since I have been connected with the trade.

3735. *Chairman.*] Do you know of any cases in which rent has been taken during the illness of the framework-knitter?—Oh yes! a great many.

3736. Will you name any of them; a woman of the name of Anne Humphry; do you know that case?—Yes; I lived within a few doors of her, at the time of her illness.

3737. Where does she live?—In Hinckley.

3738. Had she been working for Mr. Smith, a bagman?—She has worked for him more than two years now.

3739. Do you know that that woman was taken ill, and was unable for nine weeks to work in her frame?—I remember it well; it was in the early part of 1853; she was very ill for nine weeks; her father worked to the same warehouse, and during that time, each week when he took in his work, Mr. Smith stopped the rent for the two frames, though the girl was not at work at all.

3740. For the whole nine weeks?—Yes.

3741. There is another case I will call your attention to, a case of Joseph Garrett's wife: do you know that case?—I know that case.

3742. Where does she live?—In Hinckley.

3743. Do you know whether she paid any rent during the time she was ill?—She did not work in the frame at the time of her illness; but her husband, who worked in the frame, had to hinder his time in seeing to her; and during four weeks he earned 6*s.* 6*d.* He took in one dozen of hose, at 3*s.* 3*d.* a dozen, each fortnight for the four weeks; and out of the 3*s.* 3*d.* for each dozen,

Mr.

Mr. Lee, the employer, stopped 2 *s.*, giving the workman 1 *s.* 3 *d.* The second fortnight the workman took in one dozen of hose, at 3 *s.* 3 *d.*, and the employer stopped 2 *s.*, as on the former occasion, giving the workman 1 *s.* 3 *d.* The workman then asked his employer if he could not afford him another three-halfpence; the employer very much abused the workman, and refused to give him a halfpenny. The following week the workman went to the Board, and they would not believe that he had to give up 2 *s.* each fortnight out of such a little work; he went to his employer, and took a written statement of his earnings; he was then advised to give up his frame; the man was almost blind with old age; he did so; and since that period he has received relief from the parish.

3744. Do you know of another case with reference to a person of the name of Hawkins?—Yes.

3745. Who was Hawkins working for?—He was working to Mr. Smith, the same bagman.

3746. That was in the present year?—Yes.

3747. How long was that man unwell?—He was unwell seven weeks.

3748. In what part of the year was that, do you recollect?—I believe it was seven weeks in the nine weeks preceding Easter week.

3749. He worked for Mr. Smith, you say?—Yes, he did.

3750. Did Mr. Smith make him pay full rent for his frame?—He has other members of his family working for Mr. Smith; and when their work was taken in on Saturday, Mr. Smith took the full rent also for Mr. Hawkins's frame, though he was not at work.

3751. Do you recollect the case of the daughter of William Thorpe, of Wolvey?—Yes, I had the case from the girl and her own mother.

3752. What was that case?—She was taken ill in the month of February last, of influenza: it was very prevalent in that district at that time. The first three weeks she did no work whatever; in the fourth week she earned 5 *s.* 0 ½ *d.* When her mother took in the work, the employer, a bagman, named Stratton, took the full rent for the four weeks, 4 *s.*, giving the woman 1 *s.* 0 ½ *d.*

3753. Here is another case I see in the paper I have before me, the case of a woman who was confined?—Yes; I know that case.

3754. During the time of her confinement was she obliged to pay the rent of her frame?—She was not at work for about five weeks; she worked then to Mr. Payne; whether she does now or not, I cannot say; she lives at Burbidge, and Mr. Payne is one of our leading manufacturers at Hinckley; her husband works to a farmer, as a day-labourer.

3755. He is an agricultural labourer?—Yes; for four weeks during the hard frost, which was at the time the woman was confined, he had but two or three days' work during those four weeks. I believe that in the sixth week the woman did one dozen of hose, at 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen; at the time she was going to the warehouse the children were crying for bread; they had nothing in the house, nor a halfpenny to purchase anything with; she promised them a bit of bread when she came back; when she got to the warehouse Mr. Payne asked her what they should do; she told him she was willing to pay the rent by a little a week; that is the rent she had run bad during the time of her confinement; he told her, he should stop the 3*s.* 6*d.*, and that she must pay him 2*s.* more the next week.

3756. That was for the weeks during which she was confined?—Yes; she stood and cried very much in the warehouse, but he refused to give up any part of the 3*s.* 6*d.*

3757. What was the man's name?—Farran.

3758. You have referred to five cases; had these persons any means of escaping from the payment of rent for their frames during the time they were unable to work them?—Not that I am aware of; in fact, it is the custom in Hinckley to take the rent whether the workman is ill or not.

3759. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you take a frame, is there any bargain made?—No, there is no bargain made.

3760. How then do you know what the demands on account of frame-rent will be?—It is the general system in practice; every workman when he takes a frame knows that he shall have stopped from his earnings so much a week for rent.

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3761. The custom is so general that it is understood; is that so?—Yes.

3762. Mr. *Gardner.*] The workman takes the frame, subject to the condition that if he should be idle, or if he should be prevented in any way from using his frame, he will still have to pay the rent?—Yes; unless the employer thinks well to make him a present of half a week's rent; but that is the general custom.

3763. Then the workman voluntarily enters into that arrangement?—Of course he does.

3764. *Chairman.*] Do you know any instances of hardships arising from old age?—There are many people in Hinckley who can earn 3*s.* and 3*s.* 6*d.* first hand; and many of them receive a little relief from the parish, as what is left to them clear out of their earnings they could not subsist upon.

3765. And do they pay precisely the same rent as an able-bodied person?—Just the same.

3766. Though they are unable to earn more than the small amount that you state?—Yes.

3767. Do you know any cases in which there has been only partial employment given out and full rent taken?—Yes; I called on a woman last week; her name was Phœbe Robinson; she is a married woman; she and her husband are both framework-knitters; she works to a bagman of the name of Aldridge; during the first week in the four weeks preceding Easter week, all the work she could obtain from the warehouse was material to make three pair of hose, at 3*s.* a dozen; out of that three pair she did not receive a halfpenny; the following week she received stuff to make three pair more, at 3*s.* 3*d.* a dozen; that was 1*s.* 6¾*d.* for six pairs of hose in the fortnight; she had to go to the warehouse seven times; and at the end of the fortnight her employer gave her 3*d.*, and kept 1*s.* 3¾*d.* for himself, out of 1*s.* 6¾*d.*

3768. Mr. *Biggs.*] What was the name of the man or woman in question? Phœbe Robinson.

3769. And who was the employer?—Mr. Aldridge; his christian name I do not know.

3770. He is a bagman, is he?—Yes.

3771. Mr. *Wickham.*] That is an uncommon circumstance, is it not?—It certainly is uncommon to receive so small an amount of work; but there are plenty of cases, I believe, of persons receiving no more work than 2*s.* or 3*s.*, who could earn double the amount, and where they have had to pay at the same time full rent. I will give you, as an instance, a case of my own: during the four weeks preceding Easter week I worked to Mr. Payne; I worked with a man of the name of Dexter; during that time he was allowed for a 4-hose frame and two footers, 24 dozen of socks or half hose at 1*s.* 3*d.* per dozen; that came to 30*s.* for the three frames; out of that there was 6*s.* for seaming, but for the two footers there were 24 dozen to foot at 6½*d.* a dozen; so that each of the two footers (and I was one) received first hand 6*s.* 6*d.*, out of that I had to pay full expenses, 2*s.* 6*d.*, just the same as though I had earned double the amount.

3772. Then you had only 3*s.* 6*d.* for yourself?—Four shillings. This Mr. Payne has now originated a new system; he takes the full rent, and in addition, compels the workman to pay a per-centage upon the work he has from the warehouse; at the time we were receiving this 24 dozen of half hose for the three frames we could have done more work; but that was all he would allow us to do for the full rent; and if we took a pound more in he would take 3*s.* more out of that pound, as poundage, as he called it, for the favour of receiving so much more work than he thought we ought to receive for the full rent.

3773. Sir *H. Halford.*] You were stinted to a certain amount, and charged a poundage on what you did; what was the amount to which you were stinted?—The two footers had 6*s.* 6*d.* each first hand for the week, and out of that they had to pay 2*s.* 6*d.* each.

3774. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And how much could they have earned?—Nearly double that.

3775. So that they had only half work given out?—Not more than half; I could have done more than double.

3776. Sir

3776. Sir *H. Halford.*] Anything they might do beyond that would be subject to an additional charge?—Yes, 3 *s.* in the pound; since Easter he has altered his system, rather; he now takes 1 *s.* in the pound on all that the workman takes in.

3777. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does he exact that 1 *s.* from all parties who bring work in?—Yes.

3778. In addition to the full rent?—In addition to the full rent.

3779. Mr. *Biggs.*] Who is this?—Mr. Payne.

3780. *Chairman.*] Is the 2 *s.* 6 *d.* to which you allude the frame rent?—It is frame rent, and the master-man's charges; in addition to that there were other expenses that I had to meet; needles and candles, and, in the winter, coal for the shop, and so on.

3781. Is there a custom of not only taking frame rent, but of exacting a poundage upon what is taken in, as a premium for giving out work?—That is the custom this Mr. Payne has originated; it is a system which he has begun for the last few weeks, or, I may say, three months nearly now.

3782. And he is one of the principal hosiers in Hinckley?—Yes.

3783. Mr. *Gardner.*] The practical effect of that is to reduce wages by that amount, is it not?—Yes; it makes very little difference to us whether it is termed a reduction of wages or a poundage, we do not receive the money; for every dozen more that I did beyond the 12 dozen, I had to do them for 5½*d.* instead of 6½*d.*

3784. *Chairman.*] In fact, he makes you pay a poundage, in addition to the frame rent, when he pays you your wages, and thereby reduces them very materially, by making you pay something for the privilege of being employed?—Yes.

3785. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why do the workmen submit to that reduction?—There is no other alternative; if a workman gives up his frame he cannot go to the parish, supposing him to be able to get work at any price; and if he had the opportunity of turning out that frame and taking in another from another employer who did not adopt that practice, he would lose, perhaps, a full week's work before he got a full week's work in the fresh frames; so that he is compelled to stay with his employer, especially in times of depression.

3786. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is employment very scarce in Hinckley?—At present.

3787. Is it not a declining place?—Yes; and to a very rapid extent.

3788. *Chairman.*] Has the population of Hinckley altered much within the last few years?—Yes.

3789. Will you state to the Committee what that alteration has been?—The population of Hinckley, in 1831, was 6,491; in 1841, it was 6,459, which was a slight decrease during the 10 years; but in 1851, it was 6,111, showing a decrease in 20 years of 380.

3790. Mr. *Biggs.*] You look on this practice of taking full rent when half work is given out, as an indirect mode of reducing wages, do you not?—It certainly takes the wages from us.

3791. It is submitted to by the workman, because work is scarce, is it not?—Yes; he cannot resist it.

3792. Why?—Because he has no means of changing his employer at the time; and if he had he could not bear the loss attendant on such a change.

3793. Is not the reason of that that there is not a sufficient demand for his labour?—Yes.

3794. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I suppose you have had active times in Hinckley?—Very active.

3795. In one of those times could Mr. Payne have persevered in the system to which you have alluded?—I cannot say what he could have done; he has never attempted it.

3796. Would the workpeople submit to it?—As fast as the men working to him could change their employer, and they could bear the expense of doing it, they would do so, no doubt.

3797. *Chairman.*] Would you not consider it fairer that the wages should be reduced to what could be afforded at once, without making deductions in this manner, and would not a workman in that case much better understand what

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he was about?—The generality of workmen in Hinckley, at least about 970 out of nearly 1,000 workmen, would be in favour of it; there are not more than 20 or 30 who are in favour of the present system; they will say, "Let us have our wages clear, whether we earn much or little, so that we may know what we shall receive at the week's end, and so that in case of sickness we may not have to pay full rent when we do not work, as is the case at present."

3798. When they take their work in, are they not at the mercy of the employer, they not knowing what will be deducted from their wages?—They are.

3799. They are at his mercy, inasmuch as he may exact at the end of the week any deductions he may please to make?—Yes.

3800. Mr. *Gardner.*] How much do you calculate you lose upon every dozen of stockings by the operation of the stoppage system?—It will vary with each hand, and with the same hand during a series of weeks.

3801. You say the effect of the system is to deprive you of something?—Yes.

3802. I want to know how much you calculate you lose on each dozen of stockings?—When I was receiving 12 dozen of feet, at 6½*d.* a dozen, the loss to me was 2½*d.* per dozen.

3803. And how much did you make in the week?—During that time I was only allowed to do 12 dozen for the full rent and charges.

3804. That was a loss of 2*s.* 6*d.*?—Yes, but I lost more than that; I lost 1*d.* a dozen more, on all I did beyond the 12 dozen.

3805. You say you lost 2*s.* 6*d.* a week?—Yes.

3806. Your earnings were reduced 2*s.* 6*d.* a week by the operation of the stoppage system?—Yes.

3807. If that system were put down by Act of Parliament, do you think your wages would be increased by that half-crown?—I do not know; that is not the question with us; what we ask for is, that what we earn we shall receive.

3808. How do you mean it is not the question with you; you tell me you lose half-a-crown a week by the stoppage system, and you ask us to do away with the stoppage system by Act of Parliament?—Yes.

3809. Then if that Act is to do you any good, it is to put that half-crown, which you say you lose, into your pocket?—We do not entertain any such question; we know that part of our earnings are taken from us for stoppage, and that in cases of sickness, and we have a great desire to have that remedied; when a man does very little work from illness or other unavoidable cause, we think he ought not to suffer to the same extent, or pay the same amount of rent, or other charges, as a man does who is in good health.

3810. But if a man hires a frame with the understanding that he is to pay rent for it whether he is well or ill, I do not see how that is anybody's look-out but his own?—According to the present custom a workman takes his frame with that understanding; but it is a custom against which the workmen protest, and they wish to see it abolished; they wish that if a man earns but 2*s.* a week, through illness or partial employment, that 2*s.* shall be received clear from the warehouse; if the employer wishes for any interest on the capital he has invested in his machinery, we do not deny him the right to it, but we wish him to take it in a different mode.

3811. Do you think that by altering the mode you will get more wages?—We do think that by altering the present mode, old and young people, and sick persons, will be benefited, though the young, active, and strong men may not.

3812. What would be the operation, as regards the young men, do you think?—There probably might be a reduction corresponding to the amount of stoppages; but it would certainly benefit the old people, and all in cases of sickness.

3813. You think that an old, or I suppose you mean, a slow or bad hand's wages would be raised if an Act of Parliament were passed putting down stoppages?—They would receive more money.

3814. You think their earnings would be increased?—Yes.

3815. *Chairman.*] That is, the children, the old men, and the sick?—Yes.

3816. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you give me the average production of a wrought-hose frame; will it turn out three dozen?—A good hand will turn out three dozen; but it will depend upon the price per dozen. One man would do, perhaps, two dozen at 4*s.* 6*d.* a dozen, and another, two dozen at 3*s.* a dozen.

3817. We will take it at 9 *s.*?—Yes.

3818. What would what you call a medium hand earn?—A medium hand would not earn more than 7 *s.*

3819. What would these old men and children earn?—From 2 *s.* and 3 *s.*, and from that to 4 *s.* each.

3820. Can you state what the deductions from that would be?—A man, whether old or young, has to pay, in the first place, 1 *s.* rent; if he be a journeyman (and there are a great number in Hinckley), he will have to pay 3 *d.* for standing, and 3 *d.* for taking in; he will have to pay a halfpenny in the shilling for winding, and a penny in the shilling for seaming; then he will have to pay for his needles, and candles, and coal for the shop, which will vary in different seasons; it is calculated, on an average, at 4 *d.* a week through the year, for candles, needles, and coals for the shop.

3821. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you not think that if the rent system were abolished, all these old and young people who produce so little in the frame would be thrown out of employment?—They might be in times of depression.

3822. Would not that be a great evil?—In times of depression, under the present system, they are kept in employment, while able-bodied men, with young children, are turned out of employment, and are obliged to go to the workhouse.

3823. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there at Hinckley any instances of frames that are not the property of the employers?—Yes, a great many.

3824. Whose property are they?—Part of them are termed bagmen; there are a few tradesmen also who own frames.

3825. And do they let them directly to the workmen?—No, to the employer, except that there may be a few, perhaps 30 in the town, in the possession of the workmen.

3826. And do those workmen get employment readily?—Not in times of depression.

3827. They do not get employment easily?—No; they must go and give a premium to the employer for work.

3828. In order to be employed they must, in fact, pay something in lieu of rent?—Yes; and in many cases we fear, in fact we know, they pay the full rent.

3829. The frames being their own?—Yes.

3830. Do you mean that they pay 1 *s.* a week?—Yes.

3831. *Chairman.*] When they are their own frames?—Yes, they do.

3832. Mr. *Biggs.*] In depressed times?—Yes.

3833. And that you consider a direct reduction of wages, do you not?—It keeps the wages out of the workman's pocket.

3834. *Chairman.*] Is there any agreement between master and man, or are the terms entirely dictated by the manufacturer, which the workman cannot avoid agreeing to?—When a working man, owning his own frame, goes to an employer, in a time of depression, and asks for work, the employer will say, "Well, what can you afford to give?" the man then has to make a tender, perhaps of a penny, three halfpence, or twopence in the shilling, to the employer for work.

3835. He has, in fact, to buy his work of the manufacturer?—He has.

3836. Mr. *Wickham.*] That is in bad times?—Yes.

3837. Sir *H. Halford.*] What gives rise, in your opinion, to this nominal rate of wages, because it appears there is a nominal and a real rate of wages?—We cannot see the necessity for it; we consider that the employer could as readily carry on his business if he paid us net earnings as by saying that he shall give us 4 *s.* a dozen, when, perhaps, out of two dozen he will only give us 7 *s.*, or after the rate of 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen.

3838. *Chairman.*] Have you any statement to put in with regard to the price of frames, and the interest and gain that is obtained by frames at Hinckley?—We have made a calculation of that sort (*producing a paper*); the average value of frames is, at the present time, according to competent authorities, framesmiths, and the generality of workmen, and also according to the latest sales, about 50 *s.* per frame; but this calculation makes them average 4 *l.*, which is more than the real average.

3839. That is a calculation on how many frames?—On 100 frames.

3840. And what length of time do you consider those frames will work?—

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In Hinckley a frame, after it has been what they term made new, will cost 8 *l.*; it can be bought lower, but they will give that for a good frame.

3841. How long will that last?—Six years, with a few incidental expenses.

3842. Mr. *Biggs.*] Your manufacture is cotton, at Hinckley, is it not?—Yes.

3843. You are talking of frames working on cotton?—Yes.

3844. You never have anything to do with frames working on worsted?—No.

3845. *Chairman.*] How long will a frame work, according to your calculation?—This calculation is that 100 frames will work for 20 years, taking them at an average value, with the general expenses.

3846. What is the profit, in 20 years, that you make upon those 100 frames for the manufacturer?—The interest, at 5 per cent., will be 400 *l.*

3847. But what will be the profit at last?—£. 3,000, after allowing 5 per cent. interest, meeting all repairs, and keeping the frames in good repair, so as to leave them, at the end of 20 years, nearly as good as they were at the beginning. (*The Witness delivered in the calculation referred to.*)

Vide Appendix.

3848. Mr. *Cheetham.*] We have had evidence given before the Committee to the effect that it would not be possible to regulate these varying prices; one man doing three dozen, another two, and another one dozen; which would you take as the standard?—I should take two dozen for Hinckley; the goods are very low; perhaps they average about 3 *s.* 9 *d.* a dozen; they would not average 4 *s.*

3849. That would be 7 *s.* 6 *d.*?—Yes.

3850. From that there is to be deducted 1 *s.* for rent?—Yes.

3851. So that the workman really only receives 3 *s.* 3 *d.*?—Six shillings and sixpence; 1 *s.* from 7 *s.* 6 *d.*

3852. How do you think it could be brought practically to work by adopting one scale at 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen?—For all sorts of hose?

3853. No, for this particular hose.—I should say it might be done; a manufacturer would calculate, certainly, what interest he should require to compensate him for the capital invested in the machinery employed for carrying on his business, and he would make a corresponding reduction, at least he would calculate on realising so much profit per dozen on the hose he had made when he sold them.

3854. The manufacturer who gets only one dozen from a frame at 3*s.* 9*d.*, and takes 1 *s.* out, is actually getting that dozen done for 2*s.* 9*d.*?—Yes.

3855. How would you deal with him; he must give 3*s.* 9*d.* still to the hand who only makes one dozen?—If it was found to be absolutely necessary to make a reduction, the reduction would be uniform on all, whether a workman made one, two, or three dozen.

3856. And do you think the workmen generally would assent to that?—Certainly. I have taken much trouble, in going round with the petition, to ascertain the opinion of each individual workman, and they are all, with a few exceptions, entirely opposed to the present system.

3857. Have they taken into account what has been stated to the Committee, that if such a system were introduced these frames which only produce one dozen a week would necessarily be thrown out of employ?—I calculate in this way: at the present time it is the interest of an employer to give out as much work as will enable him to take the rent; it is his interest to employ old people in preference to young and active people; we find that to be true from experience; in times of depression young and active men, with small families, will have to go to the union workhouse, while old people who can earn 3*s.* or 4*s.* a week only will be kept at work; if we came to a net system, and the employer depended entirely for his profits on the work made in the machinery, the more work a workman could do the better it would be for the employer, because the better his machinery would pay him.

3858. The effect of thus producing more work must necessarily be to throw out of employment a number of inefficient hands?—It would be preferable that old people should be thrown out of employment rather than that young and active men with families should be thrown out of employment, even if such was found to be necessary, that is, if the demand was not equal to the supply.

3859. Have the workmen a clear notion of the principle which regulates the demand for their labour; do they clearly understand that the employer has no power

power to create an active demand for their labour?—We are very well aware of that.

3860. That he is subject to the same principle in his business that you are yourselves subject to in the labour market?—Yes.

3861. Do you expect more from this legislation than the removal of what you state to the Committee as the subject of complaint and grievance?—We do not consider it a question of wages at all; what we complain of is the stoppages from our earnings.

3862. Mr. *Biggs.*] You want to do away with what you consider a vexatious mode of carrying on the business?—Yes.

3863. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have the workmen, as a body, any opinion that the object could be carried out by voluntary arrangement between themselves and their employers?—We believe it could not.

3864. Have you heard that it has been done in the town of Leicester?—We have heard so; but taking the trade collectively, we believe it could not be the case.

3865. Mr. *Biggs.*] Why not?—We find ourselves entirely helpless in the hands of the employers; whatever they dictate we are compelled to submit to, and we see no chance whatever of coming to any voluntary arrangement.

3866. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you ever proposed it to the employers at all?—Never; but this we have proposed; we have proposed to establish a committee of arbitrators in Hinckley, consisting partly of workmen, partly of employers, and partly of independent gentlemen; we have made applications of that kind to the manufacturers, but they would not even listen to any such proposition.

3867. Have any of the workmen at Hinckley removed to the town of Leicester, to seek employment there?—Yes, great numbers have done so within the last 25 years.

3868. Anddo you think they will continue to do that, as opportunities occur?—They always take every opportunity they can to get away from Hinckley.

3869. Have they any objection to entering into steam-mills at Leicester?—No.

3870. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you think is the reason why you find yourself thus helpless in the hands of your employers?—We depend on them entirely for our employment; and our wages are such that we are almost at starvation point; therefore we have not the means to move to any other town, or from one employer to another, except at times when there is a very good trade.

3871. Have you any idea of the cause which is at the bottom of the present lowness of wages?—No; this we know, that wages have gradually declined for many years past.

3872. Do you think that has been owing to a superabundance of labour in relation to the demand?—On the one hand, no doubt.

3873. What else is it owing to?—We believe that, in part, it arises from the competition of the employers.

3874. But that must be favourable to the workman, must it not?—In a good trade it might be, but in times of depression I believe not; in Hinckley we have found it to be the case for many years that a man will start perhaps with a dozen frames, and get employment from a large warehouse, and he will employ 12 men, and if he can get eight, or 10, or 12 more independent frames, he will extend that employment over the whole, as is the case at the present time; he will give men half work instead of whole work, and take full rent from each; and this man, beginning with no capital, and depending on credit and the rents of frames, gradually increases his business; such persons have no capital to stand on; they are not able to bear stock for any length of time, and are compelled to sell their goods, and in times of depression they must sell them for what they can get; but when goods are once sold in the market for a certain low price, we believe that the other manufacturers have great difficulty in selling at higher prices.

3875. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think there is any prospect of anything being done by voluntary arrangement?—No.

3876. Must not any arrangement be universally consented to in order to ensure success?—Yes, it must be. To give an instance. A few years ago Mr. Sills, of Hinckley, proposed to take off half of the rent, and to take 6 *d.* instead of 1 *s.*; but after two weeks, seeing that no other employer would do the same, he returned to the old system.

3877. If there was any manufacturer who did not consent, he would under-

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sell all the rest, and the whole thing must fail?—Yes; as regards Mr. Payne's custom of taking a per centage, when he began to do so another employer made a direct reduction to enable him to sell with Mr. Payne. It is the general rule to take 1 *s.* rent, but we have three bagmen in the town taking 1 *s.* 3 *d.*

3878. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How did the employer get on, who made a reduction to meet Mr. Payne?—He succeeded.

3879. And his men were kept in employ?—Yes; but they received no more employment after the reduction than they did before.

3880. So that the poundage system, though it is called a stoppage or deduction, is in fact a reduction of wages?—Yes.

3881. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have known Hinckley upwards of 20 years, I believe?—I have always lived there, except at times when I have had no work to do.

3882. There was 20 years ago a considerable export of Hinckley produce to the United States, was there not?—I have so read.

3883. And I believe there is none now?—I cannot say that there is.

3884. You say that the population has declined?—It has.

3885. And you say that your branch is the worst paid branch in the trade, do you not?—We do.

3886. To what do you ascribe that?—We cannot ascribe it to anything but the general disposition of the manufacturers; they appear to be determined to pay the lowest price in the three counties.

3887. Do you think the excessive lowness of wages at Hinckley arises from the cupidity of the manufacturers?—Not entirely; to some extent it does, no doubt.

3888. There were formerly some 24 and 26 gauge frames at Hinckley, were there not?—Yes.

3889. They have nearly disappeared now, have they not?—Yes.

3890. They are reduced now to 21 gauge frames?—Yes.

3891. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you attribute your present depressed state to a determination on the part of the employers to give particularly low wages?—We believe they could give higher wages.

3892. I understood you to say, in reply to a question put to you by Mr. Cheetham, that you were perfectly aware of the principle which regulated the laws of supply and demand, and that the employer had no command over the rate of wages?—I understand that employers can, if they will, give a corresponding rate of wages with the employers of other towns engaged in the same trade.

3893. *Chairman.*] Do you consider that employment altogether depends upon the supply and demand; is there not another ground, that of obtaining rent for the frames, totally unconnected with the supply and demand for hosiery?—I cannot say; we do not profess to understand, thoroughly, what is termed political economy.

3894. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say many of the framework-knitters have left Hinckley, and gone to Leicester?—Yes.

3895. Are there any wide frames in Hinckley?—Yes.

3896. Many?—Not so many as there were.

3897. In fact, the trade in Hinckley is declining, year by year, is it not?—Yes.

3898. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think that there are more frames at Hinckley than are wanted for the work produced there?—Yes; at the present time, though when the demand is good I believe there are no more frames than there is work for.

3899. Taking a family, a man, his wife, and some children, are there, generally speaking, more frames in that family than could be fully employed?—In these times there are; if a family holds four or five frames they would not get more work than could be done by two or three.

3900. But still the rent has always to be paid on every one of those frames?—Always.

3901. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is there no other employment to be found in Hinckley than stocking-making?—That is the chief business of the town.

3902. Is there any indisposition, on the part of the workmen, to seek some other trade when there is an opening?—As far as they can they do; I have heard many workmen say, that if they could only get a start in selling lucifer matches, or any thing of that sort, they would gladly do so.

3903. *Chairman.*]

3903. *Chairman.*] Is there much agricultural employment in the neighbourhood of Hinckley?—Not much.

3904. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do the workmen chiefly work in their own houses or in shops?—Generally the frames are in small shops, containing two or three or four frames each; some have as many as half a dozen; there is one with 17 and another with about 30, but they are the two largest in the town.

3905. Do you think that the number of shops has increased?—I do not see that there has been any increase for a number of years except with respect to the one of which I speak, which contains 30 frames.

3906. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are the frames generally kept in good repair?—The frames belonging to the manufacturers are; those belonging to the bagmen are not.

3907. Such repairs are done at the expense of the bagman or employer, are they not?—Yes.

3908. But the bagmen neglect to keep them in repair, do they?—Yes; to a far greater extent than the employers.

3909. Mr. *Biggs.*] I suppose you know that the system of frame rent and charges is not a modern introduction; it is an old system, is it not?—Yes.

3910. You know it existed at the time when the trade was in great prosperity?—Yes.

3911. Without causing any distress at that time?—At that time, up to 1825, the frame rent was only 9 *d.*, and wages were much higher than they are now.

3912. Do you think that the difference of 3 *d.* a week could cause the distress which at present exists?—Not much, as regards the distress of a family, but still it is a vexatious exaction.

3913. But is the system of frame rent and charges an adequate cause for the existing distress?—I believe not.

3914. Is not the distress which at present prevails to be traced rather to the excess of labour and to the want of employment?—Excess of labour is a great evil; it causes wages to decline.

3915. *Chairman.*] Is it not as much the object of the workmen, in petitioning, to get rid of the vexation and torment to which they are at present subjected, as to obtain an increase of their wages?—We do not consider it is a wages question at all; we complain of these deductions, and we wish for legislative interference to put an end to them.

3916. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you aware that Mr. John Biggs says, that the first result of any such legislative interference as has been proposed would be to throw 10,000 people out of employment?—It might throw out of employment a number of old people in times of depression; when the demand is good the supply in Hinckley is not more than the demand requires; but, in times of depression, such as the present, it would, I have no doubt, tend to throw old people out of employment.

3917. *Chairman.*] Then it is with a view to get rid of the vexation and torment of the present system that you are petitioning?—Entirely.

3918. Mr. *Mundy.*] You do not think it is an idea prevalent among the workmen of Hinckley that the enactment of this law would have the effect of raising their wages?—They do not take that into consideration; all they complain of is, that when they have earned so much a part is deducted from the amount, which they never receive; and what they wish is, that what they earn they shall receive.

3919. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What do you mean by their earnings; do you mean that if they do work to the amount of 9 *s.* they should receive the 9 *s.* without deduction?—Yes; whether it be 9 *s.* or 6 *s.*; what we wish is, that they should receive their earnings, whether much or little, free from any stoppages whatever.

3920. Take two dozen at 4 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen, or three dozen at 3 *s.*?—It matters not which.

3921. From that you would have 1 *s.* deducted; that would leave 8 *s.*?—Yes.

2922. Is what you wish this, that you should have the whole 9 *s.* paid you?—Not at all; what we wish for is this: if a workman can earn 8 *s.* clear, when he has plenty of work, and when he is in health, and able to do that quantity

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of work, he shall, if he is ill, and cannot earn more than 4 *s.*, receive what he earns clear of all deductions.

3923. In adopting a net system you would, of course, take off the amount earned by the workman a sum equivalent to the rent he now pays?—If a man who can earn 12*s.* a week does, for instance, three dozen of hose, at 4*s.* a dozen, you would take a shilling off that; that would be 4*d.* per dozen, and then he would be making the hose for 3*s.* 8*d.*; we believe that it would be as easy for an employer to give him 3*s.* 8*d.* a dozen, as to say, "I shall give you 4*s.* a dozen, and charge a shilling a week rent for your frame." At present, when that same workman is ill, and can only make one dozen, he pays the shilling rent, when in fact he ought only to pay 4*d.*; and the employer, instead of giving him 3*s.* 8*d.*, gives him, in fact, but 3*s.*

3924. Sir *H. Halford.*] As a general principle, is it not manifest that in a failing trade, the machinery, by means of which the trade is carried on, would sink in value?—Considerably.

3925. In such a state of things would it not appear that a workman engaged in that trade would, at least, be entitled to such compensation as would arise from the diminished value of the machinery?—If, when a frame was worth 20*l.*, or would cost 20*l.*, it was necessary to pay 9*d.* rent, the workman, when it is lowered in value to half of 20, ought to pay no more than 4½*d.*

3926. You consider that the workman would be entitled to some counter-vailing advantage, looking to his depressed condition, and to the diminished value of the machinery in which he is employed?—We believe that if 9*d.* a week was sufficient to compensate a manufacturer for his capital employed in a machine worth 20*l.*, 4½*d.* ought to be enough for one worth only 10*l.*

3927. But instead of that the workman has to pay 1*s.*?—Yes; and in some cases, 1*s.* 3*d.*

3928. Mr. *Gardner.*] If frames are so valuable, how do you account for the fact of many of the manufacturers having given up so many of their frames; the last witness, Mr. Corah, for instance, employs 1,000 independent frames; why, if frames are so valuable as you assume them to be, does he not purchase the whole number of frames he requires?—I never knew but one employer in Hinckley attempt to decline from the trade, and that is Mr. Sills; he has had several sales lately; at the time when Mr. Muggeridge was at Hinckley, in 1844, he had 800, and now he only has 150; the last sale of his frames was to be during the present week.

3929. Is it not the fact, that 20 or 30 years ago a workman produced much less from a frame than he does now?—Yes.

3930. Would he produce three dozen now where he produced only two dozen then?—Yes, quite that, or more.

3931. Would he produce double the quantity now?—No, not double.

3932. If he does three dozen, and a shilling is charged for rent, that amounts to 4 *d.* a dozen?—Yes.

3933. So that the workman, looking at it in the light of a reduction of charge, pays no more now than he did then?—But there is a great difference in the prices paid per dozen 20, or perhaps 30, years ago and the present time. I have a statement here for one particular sort of hose, that is men's hose, for 1833, 1847, and the present time. In 1833, for 74 leads the price was 4*s.* a dozen, without narrowings in the heel; at the present time, for 75 leads, with five narrows in the heel, the price is 3 *s.* 9 *d.*; but when we come to 106 leads, which is one of a higher sort, in 1833 the price was 8 *s.* a dozen, or 8 *s.* 3 *d.* with narrows in the heel, and the present price is 6*s.* 3 *d.* with narrows in the heel. So that the very highest sort of goods made in Hinckley have decreased in price more than the lower sorts; while, on the lower sorts, the reduction is only about 6 *d.* a dozen, on the higher sorts it is 2 *s.*

3934. Mr. *Biggs.*] Living, as you do, at Hinckley, which you say is a declining place, and which will inevitably decline more and more from the force of circumstances over which we have no control, do you know that fashioned hose made in single frames in the country can be made equally good in all respects for 1 *s.* 10 *d.*?—I never saw any made by steam-power, though I have heard several times that such is the case.

3935. Do you think that, in the face of that, there is any prospect of increased employment in your business at Hinckley?—We do not expect any great increase of employment.

John Sketchley.

25 May 1855.

3936. Would it not be better, do you think, to take to other occupations?—We do, as fast as we can.

3937. Do you see any possible remedy for the present distress, except diminishing the number of persons engaged in the trade?—We do not ask for any law which shall give us permanent employment, but we wish for legislative protection against these stoppages, because as wages diminish while the stoppages remain as they are at present, those stoppages bear more heavily every year upon the workman.

3938. Sir *H. Halford.*] Where such an amount of profit from frame-rent is capable of being derived, is it not your opinion that those who derive that profit will continue to carry on the trade on the present system, in preference to adopting what may be considered to be an unproved mode?—It depends on whether the new system would be more profitable to them than the present one. I have a document here (*producing a paper*) which I should like to deliver in; it is a statement of the average gross earnings of 15 persons; 11 men, two boys, and two females; there are the names of the workmen, the names of the masters of the shops, and the names of their employers; it is there shown how many dozen they do in a week on an average; the price per dozen; the total gross earnings; the rent; the charges and other expenses; the total deductions; the net earnings; the number of hours of work per week, and the age of each workman. (*The Witness delivered in the paper referred to.*)

Vide Appendix.

3939. Have you heard that the net system has been carried out in Leicester to some extent?—I have heard so.

3940. Can you tell us from your own personal knowledge whether or not it is satisfactory?—It cannot be; we believe that no beneficial or satisfactory change can be made unless it be uniform.

3941. And that you think cannot be brought about without the aid of an Act of Parliament?—We believe not.

John Ginns, called in; and Examined.

John Ginns.

3942. *Chairman.*] ARE you a Framework Knitter at Hinckley?—Yes.

3943. You have been working in the wide-frame, have you not?—Yes.

3944. Have you heard the testimony of the last witness, Sketchley?—Yes.

3945. Do you agree generally with the statement he has been making about the trade?—Quite so.

3946. Have any instances come within your own knowledge of people paying frame-rent when they have been sick and ill?—Yes.

3947. Just state them, if you please?—Not in the wide frames particularly.

3948. State what instances you know; is it the custom in Hinckley to take frame-rent when the framework knitters are ill?—Yes, that is quite the custom.

3949. State, if you please, any cases you know of?—This is one; it is a person named Charles Cobley: in the Christmas week of 1853 he was taken very ill with inflammation in the stomach; he was unable to work for more than three weeks; the third week, although he was not fit to work, he began to do a little; that week he earned, first hand, 6 *s.* 3 *d.*, but his rent and charges for the three weeks amounted to 13 *s.* 6 *d.*, or 4 *s.* 6 *d.* per week; his employers gave him back, out of the rent for the three weeks, 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, the master of the shop gave 1 *s.* 6 *d.*; total 2 *s.* 9 *d.*, which being deducted from 13 *s.* 6 *d.*, left 10 *s.* 9 *d.* for him to pay; so that when he gave up the 6 *s.* 3 *d.* he had earned, he was 4 *s.* 6 *d.* in debt, which he had to pay afterwards; he had paid all he had earned, and besides that he had to pay more afterwards.

3950. Mr. *Gardner.*] He worked for nothing, and 4 *s.* 6 *d.* less than nothing?—Yes.

3951. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you know that to be true of your own knowledge?—Yes. I have a paper containing a number more cases of oppression, which I will deliver in.

3952. Mr. *Gardner.*] What would you have us do to meet that case?—I cannot say exactly; we want to get quit of this. I myself worked to an employer four years last Christmas, and had taken in 3 lbs. 7 oz. over my accounts, and he gave no work out at all until the next week; and when I took my work in the second week he took a fortnight's rent for all my frames.

John Ginns.

25 May 1855.

3953. Why did you submit to that?—There was no alternative to get from it; they have got the money in their possession; and while we hold the frames they claim the rent, and keep it out of our earnings.

3954. Mr. *Biggs.*] And have you no other employment to go to?—Not at all; I am getting almost past going to anything fresh; I should be glad if I could.

3955. Mr. *Gardner.*] We admit that your wages are lamentably low; but we want to know how an Act of Parliament is to improve your condition in any way?—I cannot say how that is to be done; I wish I could.

3956. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How long have you been a framework knitter?—Thirty-nine years.

3957. And during that time wages have been reducing, I suppose?—Yes; when I first learnt to work in a frame the wrought-hose hands in Hinckley could earn 13*s.* and 14*s.* a week; middling hands could do that.

3958. And what can they earn now?—Not more than 7*s.*; they have been reduced one-half since that time.

3959. What is the expectation among the workmen of Hinckley as to the result of an Act of Parliament; do they think the effect would be to raise the 7*s.* to 8*s.*, or 9*s.*, or what?—They think this, that they should get shut of these charges; we are well aware that machinery is operating strongly against us; we at Hinckley knew not a wide frame till about twelve years ago; there were not at that time more than eight in the town; but now we have 200 heads of circular frames.

3960. At Hinckley?—Yes; and there are more, I think, ordered; there is a factory being built at Earl Shilton, which is three miles from Hinckley, for the same purpose.

3961. That is to make, not the best wrought hose, but an inferior class of goods?—It is a lower class of goods that is made in these circular frames, to supersede the straight down hose; they also make wrought hose in wide frames now, with machines to narrow them.

3962. Sir *H. Halford.*] How many do they make at a time?—Some three, some two.

3963. Are those machines a late invention?—Yes, they have not been in Hinckley more than three or four years.

3964. Will they produce as good a quality of hose as the old ones?—I think quite as good.

3965. Is it the case that the same workman can make three times as many as he could formerly, and equally good?—No, not three times as many.

3966. I thought you said they make them three at once?—Yes; but then those that are made three at once are footed in another frame; the fact is, that the lower our wages get the more they impose upon us in rent.

3967. How do you explain that?—When there comes a depression in the trade our wages get lower, and then they impose more on us by the rent, because the men are more dependent on them.

3968. It is a mode of reserving a profit to themselves while the wages fail the workman?—Yes.

3969. Is there anything else that you have to communicate to the Committee?—No, nothing particular. I have a few statements which I should wish to put in. I have one here which shows what is realised by a two hose-frame in 20 years. (*The Witness delivered in the Paper referred to* (I).)

Vide Appendix.

3970. *Chairman.*] Is there anything else that occurs to you as being desirable for the Committee to know?—No, not particularly.

3971. Do you think there is a general desire among the workmen in Hinckley to have an alteration made in the law?—Yes.

3972. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is a general feeling, is it?—Quite general.

3973. They desire a law, enacting that these deductions shall not in future be made by stoppage from wages?—Yes.

Martis, 5° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Wickham.	Sir Joshua Walmsley.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Mundy.
Mr. Packe.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Charles Billson*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. C. *Billson*.

5 June 1855.

3974. *Chairman.*] ARE you engaged in the hosiery manufacture at Leicester?—I am a manufacturer, and have been so for 25 years.

3975. In the hosiery trade?—Yes.

3976. Will you tell the Committee what number of frames you employ?—The firm of which I am a member, Billson & Hames, hold about 700 frames.

3977. Are all those frames your own property?—Exclusively.

3978. Then you have no independent frames?—We do not employ many; we only employ them occasionally; we are not responsible for the employment of any independent frames.

3979. What is your mode of dealing; do you take rent for your frames, or do you adopt any other system?—We take rent.

3980. In all cases?—In all cases.

3981. Are your frames chiefly in the town of Leicester?—We have about a third on our own premises; the other two-thirds are spread over the country; some of them are in the town.

3982. Are those that are in the villages under the agency of middlemen?—Those in the villages are; all are except those which are on our own premises.

3983. I understand you to say that two-thirds of them are in the villages?—At least two-thirds; perhaps rather more.

3984. Do you ever hear any complaints of the system of frame rent?—No, not of the system of frame rent.

3985. Not among those you employ?—No; I never heard of any complaint of frame rents.

3986. The workmen, I apprehend, do not bring their work to your warehouse?—No; it is brought by the middlemen.

3987. Then if there were any complaints made, probably the middleman would be the person most likely to know of it rather than the master manufacturer?—He would.

3988. Have you never heard from a middleman that there are complaints made by the men in his employment?—I have never heard so.

3989. Do those in the town of Leicester, who are in your own factory, pay frame rent?—We take rent from them also.

3990. With regard to them, if there were any complaint, it would come direct to yourself?—It would; I have reason to believe that the workers in the factory would deprecate any alteration; as to those working on our own premises, it would not be to their advantage, in all probability. I should say it is the better class of machinery, larger machines, that we have on our own premises.

3991. Is that what you call the broad gauge?—Wider frames; larger machines.

3992. What sort of manufacture [are you engaged in in the villages?—We are chiefly engaged in the villages in children's socks.

Mr. *C. Billson.*

5 June 1855.

3993. Have you any of the wrought hose manufacture?—No, we are not in the wrought hose trade.

3994. Is it not the case that the complaints proceed more from the workmen of the wrought hose branch than any other?—I believe it is; unquestionably they are the worst paid.

3995. With regard to those who are employed in the factory at Leicester, are there any deductions made from them besides the rent which you take for the frame?—Yes.

3996. What other deductions do you take from them?—For standing and gas and winding. I believe those are the items.

3997. Is there any deduction for oil or needles?—We do not use much oil; there is no deduction on that head; the charges which we make over the rent in the factory, I find, from the experience of years, about meet the charges of the establishment, that is, the expenses of conducting it.

3998. With regard to those frames that you employ in Leceister, are you in the habit of giving them regularly work sufficient for the week?—When we employ them we do; they frequently stand still; they are frequently unemployed.

3999. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you speaking with regard to a particular season of the year?—It depends upon the state of trade.

4000. Is yours what you call a season trade; is there more employment at one season of the year than another?—One branch of our trade has its season more particularly than another; that branch is called the fancy hosiery.

4001. *Chairman.*] I understand you to say that you have about 230 frames in your factory at Leicester?—I have not spoken quite accurately as to that; perhaps 130.

4002. There are certain seasons of the year when the whole of those 130 frames are not employed?—When some of them are not employed.

4003. You turn off, I presume, a portion of your operatives when the frames are not employed?—Yes, or limit them in the amount of work in a flat season, which they generally prefer.

4004. Then in point of fact you do employ at all times, partially, the 130 frames?—Not the whole of them.

4005. But in lieu of taking a smaller number of frames, you employ them partially, but fewer days in the week?—We do.

4006. When you employ them those fewer days in the week, do you take the whole week's rent of the frame?—No, we do not.

4007. Do you deduct a proportion of the rent of the frame according to the time you employ them?—Both rent and charges.

4008. Do you know whether that is the general custom of the trade?—I suppose it is; I believe it is; there may be exceptions to it.

4009. There are some hosiers in Leicester, I think, who adopt a different system; the net system instead of the frame-rent system?—I have heard of several firms adopting a species of discount instead of rent, but I am not aware of there being an absolute net system adopted.

4010. That is what you would call a poundage system?—Yes, a poundage system.

4011. You say that the workmen prefer the frame-rent system to any other system; either the net or the poundage system?—Those working in good frames; large frames.

4012. Do you think that the workmen in the wrought hose manufacture would prefer the frame rent to the poundage or the net system?—I do not think they would prefer any change unless it was retaining the present rate, not having to pay the charges.

4013. Among the workmen you employ, some I suppose are good hands, some children, and some weak hands?—We have nothing to do with the employment of the frames that are not on our own premises.

4014. But they are your frames under the agency of middlemen?—We let them to middlemen.

4015. And you do not know anything as to how they employ them?—Not positively.

4016. That is left entirely to their option?—That is left to them; we do not interfere as a rule.

4017. There

4017. There are, of course, very honourable exceptions; and probably it may be more the rule than the exception; but some of those middlemen, if they choose to act dishonourably and extortionately with regard to the workmen, have it in their power to do so, have they not?—They could only do so when trade is very flat.

4018. But in the course of the year there is usually a period, is there not, during which trade is flat?—Frequently that is the case; it may be said that there are portions of the year when trade is flat.

4019. In that season of the year, if they were unprincipled enough to do it, they could, in order to increase their own gains, very much impose upon the workmen, could they not?—Perhaps they might.

4020. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are those workmen who do not work upon your premises acquainted generally with the warehouse price?—Yes.

4021. You think they are?—Yes.

4022. By what means are they acquainted with it?—It is popularly known what is the price paid for the class of goods we make; they have a list price, which is well known all over the trade.

4023. A list price published?—Not published, but known as much as if it were published.

4024. But how is it known?—I can scarcely say how it is known.

4025. Are there any means taken to secure that knowledge to the workmen generally?—Workmen know the list price as well as I do; and I know the price of other people as well as they know themselves.

4026. That is hardly an answer to my question; what I ask is how they know it?—I am not prepared to say; when an alteration takes place in the list it is generally done by concert.

4027. That is to say, it is done by concert among the hosiers?—No, among the workmen.

4028. Do they communicate with you, in that case, or with the middlemen?—The middlemen generally communicate with the manufacturers; sometimes the workmen themselves communicate.

4029. Supposing a workman were to come to your warehouse and say he was ignorant of the price paid at the warehouse, and ask you to inform him, would you inform him of the price?—I should not like to be troubled every day with inquiries of that sort.

4030. Generally speaking, you are not personally acquainted with the workmen?—No.

4031. Supposing a man were to come to you and say, I am working for a middleman who you employ, and I wish to know the price paid for the work; what should do in that case?—If he assigned any sufficient reason for making the inquiry, I should inform him; he might say that he suspected he was not being fairly dealt with, and in that case I should inform him.

4032. Suppose his case was that he did not know?—Such a case could scarcely occur.

4033. But the middleman makes his own bargain, does he not, with the workman?—The workman knows the price he ought to receive; that price is popularly known as much as the price of anything sold in the market.

4034. Are you prepared to say that a middleman always pays his workman the same price as you pay to the middleman?—I cannot be prepared to say that, because I am not present when payment is made.

4035. What I want to know is, whether the middleman derives a profit from the difference in the price paid by the warehouse and the price paid by him to the workmen?—I have reason to believe that he does not.

4036. But you are not sure of it?—I cannot be.

4037. If you were to discover that he did, what course should you take; should you take any notice of it?—Most likely I should remonstrate with him, and put an end to what I should regard as an unfair practice.

4038. But, in point of fact, there would seem to be no valid security to the workman that he receives the same price?—No, perhaps not.

4039. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I think you say that two-thirds of your frames are worked in the out townships?—Yes, or in the town of Leicester.

4040. Those are small frames, the narrow frames?—Most of them; the larger part.

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4041. Those are let to individual workmen?—No; to the middleman, who is responsible for the materials, and for the safe keeping of the machinery.

4042. You have no frames let to the workmen direct; they are all let to the middlemen, are they not?—In some instances to the workmen.

4043. I think you say that you have no control whatever over the middleman as to what he does with the workmen, or what rate he charges?—No, we have no control.

4044. Do you frequently come in contact with the men yourself, so as to ascertain what is passing?—If any unfair course of conduct was pursued, the workmen would complain to me of it, I have no doubt.

4045. Whether in Leicester, or in the out townships?—Yes.

4046. The middleman takes out the goods from you?—He takes out the work.

4047. And brings in the material to you?—He takes out the material, and brings in the wrought work.

4048. You say you charge a rent upon the frames; what rent do you charge to the middleman for your frames?—The ordinary rent is 1 *s.* a week; that is for the narrow frames, up to 18 inches.

4049. Does the middleman get any profit upon that rent?—I think not.

4050. It is all paid to you?—It is all paid to us.

4051. Do you know whether more frames are absolutely in employ than goods are given out for to keep employed?—That might be, to some slight extent, the case; I do not know that it is.

4052. In your case the middleman has no benefit whatever as regards the rent of your frames?—None whatever.

4053. Do you know whether in any case in which you employ a middleman he has also independent frames?—I think some of the middlemen have a small number of independent frames; but they generally work to more warehouses than one.

4054. Is there not a temptation, then, if a middleman can obtain a frame at 6 *d.* a week, instead of 1 *s.*, for the middleman to employ a larger number of frames than is necessary for the goods which he has to manufacture?—If the hands were not satisfied with the amount of work given them by the middleman, they would leave him, and seek another frame.

4055. That would be the case in good times?—In very flat times the work might be spread over a larger number of frames than the manufacturer, from whom the middleman takes out his work, is aware of.

4056. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is to say, other frames might be run in?—Yes; I question whether that would be a great evil.

4057. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have 500 frames in the country districts; do you give out work sufficient at all times to employ those 500 frames?—We do not employ all our machinery at all times; when we find employment we give a sufficiency.

4058. And when you do not find full employment you do not take full rent?—No.

4059. That is, you do not take full rent for half work?—We take rent according to the work we give out; for instance, if I give out work for 10 frames, and the middleman chooses, by arrangement with his hands, to spread that work over 20 frames, we still take the rent of the 10, and he divides it, and keeps his hands together.

4060. What the Committee is desirous of ascertaining is this, whether what has been reported by several witnesses, who have been here now, and previously, is correct, that there are a larger number of frames employed than there is work for, and that the full rent is charged for those frames when they are only partially employed?—I do not believe that to be true, except in very isolated cases.

4061. Do you know of any such cases yourself?—I have never met with any; I have never had any such complaint made to me.

4062. And do you think that if any such complaints existed, you would have heard of them?—I think so.

4063. When a man, instead of three or four dozen of goods which he could make, takes in only two dozen, do you charge him the full rent?—If he has material

material enough to make a full quantity, we take the rent, of course, it being his own fault that he does not do more.

4064. Do you, or the middleman, ascertain whether he was capable of doing the work or not?—I do not know that he does.

4065. Then it would appear from your answer, that whether he were ill or well, the same rent would be taken?—We do not take rent when hands are unwell; we never take rent in times of sickness.

4066. How do you ascertain whether the workmen are unwell or not?—We believe the report of the undertaker.

4067. But seeing that you never mix with the workmen yourself, how do you ascertain it?—We believe the report of the undertaker.

4068. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do your middlemen charge rent in case of illness?—I believe not.

4069. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you know that to be the fact?—I cannot speak positively to it.

4070. You only speak positively with regard to the frames under your own control?—Yes.

4071. But as to frames which are let out into the other districts, and through middlemen, you are unable to speak?—Not positively.

4072. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you speak of the price paid for the work being generally known, do you mean the price clear of all deductions?—Yes; the price paid at the warehouse; the gross price, I mean.

4073. Are the deductions equally well known?—They cannot be accurately known; and they may vary between one undertaker and another to some slight extent; but great variations, I apprehend, would not be tolerated.

4074. But they are, to a considerable degree, arbitrary on the part of the middlemen, are they not?—Except that it is a contract between the two parties.

4075. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] The same rent, I presume, is taken whether the quantity of goods sent in be large or small; that is, whether the frame employed is worked by a slow hand or by a quick one?—Yes.

4076. Whether it is worked by a woman, a child, or a man?—Yes.

4077. Whether it is worked by a child or a grown person, you do not inquire?—We do not; children must learn if they are to be brought up to the trade; and it is not to be supposed that a child can do as much work as an adult.

4078. You say you have not heard of any complaints from the workmen as to frame-rents, but you know, do you not, that there is a great desire on the part of a great number of the workmen to do away with frame-rents?—If thereby they can obtain increased wages; but I do not believe in the general prevalence of a desire to change the system.

4079. How do you account, then, for such very large numbers of signatures being obtained to petitions on this subject to the House of Commons?—I think those petitions have been got up. I think it is a very easy thing to get petitions signed; they are carried round to large shops, and people do not like to be singular, and to some extent they are under intimidation. I have known hands to be under intimidation; and then they are told by parties, who ought to know better, that this will have the effect of increasing their wages; they do not trouble themselves about it, but are pleased to hear it, and therefore they sign the petitions which are presented to them. I do not think that the number of signatures obtained under such circumstances is a good criterion of the interest felt in the question.

4080. Are you aware that those petitions have proceeded from all the villages round, as well as the town of Leicester?—Very likely; they have been carried all round, I have no doubt, in the same manner.

4081. That is the usual course, is it not?—It is very commonly done.

4082. You have spoken of your own shop, and having something like 150 or 200 frames; do the workmen in your employ, who work steadily in the shop, obtain better or worse wages than those employed in the narrow frames in the suburbs or in Leicester?—I have reason to believe that they obtain far better wages; that is chiefly ascribable to the character of the machinery.

4083. Is it not also ascribable to the more steady and constant work, regular hours and so on?—Not much.

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4084. Do you not insist on your men coming to work at a certain time?—No.

4085. Is not that generally done?—No.

4086. They come when they like?—Yes.

4087. You think that your charging them standing room and other charges, if they do not come to work, is a sufficient check?—It is the only influence we can have over them.

4088. But that is a sufficient inducement to them to keep regular hours?—The charges we make are no more than in proportion to the narrow frames, and therefore they do not exercise more influence over them.

4089. Yours are wide frames, are they not?—Yes.

4090. Have you seen the frames that are employed by Mr. Corah?—I have not been over his factory.

4091. It was stated here the other day, that he could produce stockings at 1 *s.* 10 *d.* of a quality equal to, if not better, than those that are now produced in the narrow frames at 3 *s.* 4 *d.* per dozen, and he has forwarded to the Committee two pairs of stockings, one pair made by his machine, and the other on the common narrow frame; will you look at those two pairs of stockings (*handing them to the Witness, who examines them*), and tell the Committee which of them is the better?—I think the work of the old make is rather the best, but there is no great difference in them.

4092. They are much the same?—Much the same.

4093. *Chairman.*] One is much cheaper than the other?—Yes; one appears to cost 1 *s.* 10 *d.* and the other 3 *s.* 9 *d.*

4094. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Seeing that the making of those stockings cost respectively 1 *s.* 10 *d.* and 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per dozen, will not the effect of that be to draw the whole of that trade into such frames as Mr. Corah is now making?—I think the tendency is to get rid of narrow frames to a great extent.

4095. And seeing those stockings, and considering the price at which they are produced in the respective frames, you would think it very desirable to do so, would you not?—Yes.

4096. That being your opinion (and I have no doubt a very sound one), what would be the effect of getting rid of the narrow frames upon the population in the neighbourhood of Leicester?—You cannot get rid of the narrow frames, except by slow degrees.

4097. But seeing that one dozen of stockings is produced at 1 *s.* 10 *d.*, and the other at 3 *s.* 9 *d.*, the use of the common narrow frames will necessarily cease, will it not?—I do not know how those are produced; it may be very expensive machinery; it may be very difficult to keep it in repair; it may be very difficult to work.

4098. Mr. *Ingham.*] But must not that be considered in the price?—There is still the inevitable competition of the narrow frames which very much impedes the development of larger and better machinery.

4099. Mr. *Gardner.*] You mean, probably, that the experiment of these steam frames has not been tried long enough to enable you to draw any conclusions from it?—Yes.

4100. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] But the opinion of Mr. Corah, who has been some 30 years in the trade, would be strong evidence of the fact we now speak of that it would eventually supersede entirely narrow frames?—I am not of opinion that steam power can be generally applied.

4101-2. You do not see much difference in the quality of those two pairs of stockings?—Not in that case.

4103. If one can be made at half, or less that half, the price of the other, will not the manufacturers generally adopt the principle on which they can produce the same work at half the price?—The tendency is to large frames; experiments have been made, but they are nothing more than experiments, with steam power; that which is now produced to me is as good a specimen as any I have ever seen.

4104. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do I understand you to express a doubt of the correctness of Mr. Corah's opinion, that stockings of that description will continue to be made at that price?—I am not prepared to challenge Mr. Corah's opinions.

4105. Mr. *Gardner.*] How long have these steam frames of Mr. Corah's been in existence?—But a very short time, I think.

4106. How

4106. How long?—A few months, I think.

4107. Sir *H. Halford.*] Suppose stockings can be made at those prices, how is it that you think the competition of narrow frames will still exist?—Because it is domestic labour; the workers in narrow frames have a great disinclination to leave the villages and come into the town; they have their garden plots to manage, and there are other considerations which disincline them to come into the town.

4108. But upon the supposition that the one description of goods can be made for 1*s.* 10*d.*, while the other costs 3*s.* 9*d.*, how is it possible that competition can be continued?—I am not informed of the circumstances.

4109. I am giving it you, upon his hypothesis, that such is the relative price?—I do not know the other attendant circumstances which might qualify that opinion in my estimation.

4110. If the employment of narrow frames continues, is it not likely that the rent obtained for the narrow frames may have something to do with their opinions?—I think not; rent must continue, or something equivalent to it.

4111. Can you tell us the selling value of a narrow frame, generally?—It depends entirely upon its condition and character.

4112. But a frame in reasonable working order?—They will sell narrow frames from 3*l.* up to 9*l.*

4113. Do you think that 1*s.* a week is a reasonable rent for frames selling at that price?—I do not see any inequity in it; I wish I had not any narrow frames.

4114. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you know what frames are let for per week by the frame-smiths in Leicester?—I think there are but few independent frames remaining.

4115. Can you speak to that point?—No; I believe I have heard that they have been let at half price.

4116. Is it not a great inducement to middlemen to take them, and spread the work, if they can get them at half price?—They would derive but a very small profit from them unless they could employ them.

4117. If, as has been stated, they employ double the number of frames that are required for the work produced, then they would get 6*d.* rent for each of those frames?—I do not believe it.

4118. You doubt those statements?—I do very much.

4119. But, personally, you have not inquired into the subject?—I must have heard it had such things prevailed to any extent.

4120. What are the ages at which children are first put to work?—I cannot say, except in winding; they begin young as winders.

4121. At what ages do they begin?—I should think, perhaps, when they are seven or eight years old.

4122. Is it customary to assemble a number of them together, and put them under the control of one female to wind for the day?—I do not know.

4123. You have not seen that?—We employ a good many winders in our own place.

4124. I am speaking of houses in different parts of the town where one person is employed to look after a large number of children?—Not winders; winding is invariably done on the premises where the yarn is wrought.

4125. Do you know of numbers of children being employed under one female for any particular work connected with the hosiery trade?—I do not; they may be employed as seamers or stitchers, as they are termed.

4126. At what age can a child be put into a frame to produce a moderate quantity of work?—I cannot say; I should think that at ten years old they might begin.

4127. What you state is this, that a child of ten years of age producing only a dozen of hose would pay a shilling rent?—I think the children are generally taught in the frames worked by their mothers, whose other occupations leave the frames vacant for certain spaces of time, when the children learn to work them, so that they would not be paying rent for a frame for a child in the strict sense of the term.

4128. Do you not think it would be more just that the rent should be paid upon the produce, and not on a fixed price, whether the frames are used by two women or children, and whether they are good, bad, or indifferent?—No; I justify the present system of frame rents, inasmuch as we have no control over

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the working of the frame, either as to time, or whether the produce is brought to me or sent to another, the workmen being totally wide of our influence in those matters.

4129. As far as I can gather from you, you know correctly all that passes in your own workshop; but as to that which you give out to the middlemen you are not well informed?—Not positively; I can only express an opinion.

4130. Mr. *Gardner.*] You speak with diffidence on the subject, because you have not been personally present, but you have a general impression?—Yes; I do not like to speak to that of which I have not a personal and positive knowledge.

4131. But you have a decided impression, that as a general rule middlemen do not charge rent in cases of illness?—Yes.

4132. Mr. *Ingham.*] Is it generally known among the workmen that you never charge rent when people are prevented working by sickness?—I think so.

4133. Do you think that if any of your middlemen did charge rent, in those cases complaints would be made to you?—I am certain they would.

4134. And you never have had such complaints?—Never.

4135. Then it is more than a mere conjecture; you have a pretty strong and confident opinion upon the subject, have you not?—Yes; but I cannot speak to that positively which I do not positively see.

4136. Sir *H. Halford.*] I dare say you recollect the Ticket Act, and are acquainted with the intended provisions of it?—I had some knowledge of it, but it was too complicated to be generally adopted.

4137. Without reference to the general provisions of the Act, do you think there is any sound and valid objection to the principle of the Ticket Act?—I think it is impossible to carry it out.

4138. Why do you think it is impossible to carry it out?—For a variety of reasons. Variations must occur in the character of yarn wrought, and there must be variations in the style and fashion of the article produced, which the restrictions of the Ticket Act would not have permitted.

4139. What do you consider to have been the object of the Ticket Act?—The object aimed at unquestionably was to insure a given price for a certain amount of work; to prevent variations in price.

4140. Was it not to secure a knowledge to the workmen of the warehouse price?—I believe that was the intention of it.

4141. Taking that as the principle of the Act, do you consider that there is any objection to it?—I do not remember the details of it; I never adopted it myself.

4142. Mr. *Gardner.*] You knew it would not work?—That is all. I determined not to act upon it, but to take the chance of incurring penalties.

4143. Mr. *Biggs.*] Why would it not work?—It was too complicated and too restrictive.

4144. Sir *H. Halford.*] It was too troublesome?—Too troublesome and impracticable.

4145. Is it impracticable that the workmen should know the warehouse prices?—I think they do generally know the price; I have reason to believe they do.

4146. What reason have you to believe that?—Because I never hear any complaints, and I know the price of an article made in the district as well as those who make it.

4147. But you having no communication with the persons who work for you, how can you say they know anything at all about it?—There is necessarily information imparted from one to another; they compare notes, and if it chances that any variation occurs, it is very soon known.

4148. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have said several times that if such and such a thing happened you think you would have heard from your workpeople that such was the case; is it the custom for them to come and appeal to you in cases such as you have mentioned?—They might appeal to me.

4149. But do they, in point of fact?—No, I have very rarely had any complaint; I do not say I have never had, but I very rarely have had any, as between the operative and the undertaker, or middleman.

4150. Communications are not in the habit of passing between you and your workmen?—No, not necessarily.

4151. Sir *H. Halford.*] Taking the case of workmen in a country village, who are under a middleman, are they not very much in his power?—Not if trade is good; if trade is bad they might have some undue influence.

4152. I am speaking of a country village, where they have not very ready means of communicating with any great number of their fellow-workmen, and where perhaps there is but one middleman in the village, who has the entire distribution of the work?—I do not know of any such village.

4153. But there may be such?—I do not think there is.

4154. How many frames ordinarily does one middleman superintend?—From five up to 50, or perhaps 60.

4155. And he receives his recognised remuneration, I believe, in the charge he makes for taking out the materials, and taking in the work?—Yes.

4156. Do you know what the rate of that remuneration generally is?—I do not; I have heard it is 3 *d.*, or 6 *d.* if the distance is great and the quantity of work is great also.

4157. Suppose one middleman superintends 30 frames, that will occupy him, I suppose, two days delivering out the materials to the workmen, and taking in the work?—It might do so.

4158. Taking that at 3 *d.* a frame, that would be 90 pence for two days' work; that would be a reasonable remuneration to him, would it not?—I think it would.

4159. He would have no fair claim to a profit beyond that?—No.

4160. Mr. *Gardner.*] Allusion has been made to extortionate charges; what is your definition of "extortionate charges"?—It is a difficult question to answer. I take it that the great consideration with the workman is the amount of wages left at the end of the week.

4161. What should you yourself consider an extortionate charge?—That which left unremunerative wages at last; for instance, in our own premises, the wages which are obtained are large; the payments are large, but the wages are very large, perhaps a good deal above the average.

4162. The word "extortion" implies injustice; the question is, whether any charge can be said to be unjust which a workman voluntarily submits to?—I cannot see that it can be considered unjust under such circumstances.

4163. Then, in fact, none of these charges can be strictly called extortionate, supposing the workmen enter into these contracts voluntarily?—I think not.

4164. But whether they are extortionate or not, they are only practicable when trade is bad?—That is the case.

4165. What is the state of the trade at present?—It has been very much depressed during the last six months, but it is now somewhat recovering.

4166. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you consider that the cases of extortion which you have mentioned are exceptional?—Yes, if they are true at all.

4167. You think that they are not the cause of the existing distress in the hosiery trade?—Certainly not.

4168. Mr. *Gardner.*] These excessive charges operate merely in the form of a reduction of wages?—It is tantamount to that.

4169. And a reduction of wages, in some form or other, is sure to happen when trade is bad?—Certainly. I think spreading, as it has been termed, is a good and not an evil, inasmuch as it prevails generally during the pressure of the time; whereas, if a positive reduction of wages occurred through a number of the hands being thrown totally out of employment, that would not be so soon remedied or recovered from.

4170. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You would call that an act of extortion, would you not?—What?

4171. The spreading work, and taking full rent for half employment?—I do not believe in the existence of the practice.

4172. You are describing such a thing, are you not?—No; I say that I think giving half employment is better than turning off half the hands entirely.

4173. Lord *J. Manners.*] Suppose the practice of giving out half work and taking full rent to prevail, what would be your opinion with regard to it?—I should discountenance it as a manufacturer.

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4174. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think that any legislative enactment, when trade is bad, could prevent that reduction of wages which is at present brought about by the operation of this rent and charges?—Decidedly not.

4175. The reduction would be sure to take place in some form?—Yes, in some form. I have been always an advocate for the highest rate of wages that the state of trade would admit of. I say that, knowing that my evidence may be published.

4176. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] I will put a case to you: suppose a frame-smith lets his frames at 6 *d.* to a middleman, the middleman lets those frames out again at 1 *s.*; provided frame rents were not enforced, would not the workmen be benefited by the remission of the rent further than the amount of the reduction in the wages?—I do not think it is possible to regulate the rate of wages by any legislative enactment.

4177. I was not speaking of that; I quite agree with you in that opinion?—If rent is disallowed some reduction in wages must take place.

4178. The question put to you was, whether the whole amount of reduction in wages would take place?—It would be beneficial to one class of hands, but greatly injurious to others; it would be beneficial to the idle and incompetent, but greatly injurious to the industrious and skilful; those who produce a great deal of work. The slightest possible deduction from the earnings of the workers on the large frames would amount to more than the rent; for example, many of the workers on my premises obtain large wages, from, say, 15 *s.* up to 35 *s.*; the slightest reduction on the wages of those earning the higher rates would amount to more than the rent; and they deprecate any interference.

4179. You have spoken of their earning from 15 *s.* up to 35 *s.* in the factory; other witnesses have spoken of high rates also in the factory; what are about the average rates in ordinary times in the villages in the case of persons working in narrow frames?—For the reasons I have already stated, it is impossible for any manufacturer to speak as to that with certainty. I assume that they are about 10 *s.*

4180. Mr. *Gardner.*] Net?—Net; I am speaking of my own trade.

4181. On the worst paid branch?—I am not conversant with the wrought-hose branch; I should say they are not so high.

4182. That is the worst paid branch?—That is the worst paid branch.

4183. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] If it were stated that they were 5 *s.*, 6 *s.*, and 7 *s.*, you would think that was below the rate?—I should; except that there might be such cases found; it requires but little strength to work a common wrought-hose frame, and therefore they are often worked by women, children, and old men, scarcely deserving the name of workmen at all.

4184. *Chairman.*] You were asked by the Honourable Member for Leicester whether there could be any injustice where the workman had the option in the agreement he was making with the master, and you said, no, there could be none?—I think there could not be.

4185. When trade is slack has the workman any option whatever in the agreement he makes with his employer?—I have no reason to believe that the terms vary between one state of trade and another.

4186. But is not the workman, when trade is slack, obliged to take any terms that may be offered to him; he must either take those terms, or have no work at all, must he not?—I do not think the terms vary; I think the terms between the middleman and the operative are the same in bad trade as in good.

4187. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You mean so far as regards charges?—Charges and prices.

4188. *Chairman.*] But there is less employment given to him in the course of the week?—That may be.

4189. Then at the end of the week he has not the wages that he has when trade is good?—No.

4190. Mr. *Gardner.*] When trade is bad, has the manufacturer any option but that of getting his goods made at the cheapest rate possible?—Of course not.

4191. Lord *J. Manners.*] Your opinion is, that if the wages are reduced the charges are reduced in a corresponding ratio?—If an insufficient quantity is given out to employ the machine.

4192. That is your opinion?—And my practice.

4193. If

4193. If you found that your opinion was unfounded, you would admit that there was a grievance, would you not?—If I was convinced of it.

4194. *Chairman.*] When trade is slack, is it not the interest of the employer to deal out a limited quantity of work?—It is his interest in one sense to prevent too large an accumulation of stock.

4195. And it is his interest also, is it not, to keep the frames employed?—It is desirable to keep the machinery employed.

4196. If there was no stoppage system, would it not be his study to produce the greatest possible amount of work by the employment of the least possible amount of machinery?—If the narrow frames could be got rid of.

4197. Would it not, then, be the interest of the employer to obtain the greatest quantity of work by the employment of the least possible amount of machinery?—Doubtless.

4198. Mr. *Ingham.*] The effect of that would be, would it not, to throw a great proportion of his hands out of employment?—I think it would; unless the reduced rate at which goods could be produced and offered for sale increased the consumption, it would have that tendency.

4199. If the market is slack, you must, of course, throw a great number of people out of employment?—Yes.

4200. You said you thought it would be improper for a man to charge the full amount of rent for his frame, when he was able only to give out half work?—Yes.

4201. Suppose the market was much depressed, and he was getting a very small price for his goods, would it not be merely another mode of reducing the amount of wages, if he maintained the full charge for rent?—It would be tantamount to it.

4202. It would not be worse than reducing the wages proportionately?—Not so bad.

4203. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why would it not be so bad?—Because the revival of trade would necessarily and inevitably bring full employment, whereas if it was a positive reduction, the former price would not be so easily recovered.

4204. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you consider frame rents a legitimate source of profit?—I do not regard it as profit.

4205. Do you think that there is no profit derived from frame rents?—I do not think there has been profit derived from the rent of small frames for many years past.

4206. You do not agree with the other witnesses who have stated that there is a profit derived from the rent of frames?—I think not; in my own case I am confident that that description of property has not paid interest; it has become very much deteriorated in value.

4207. Your opinion is founded on your own experience from an accurate knowledge of the practice generally?—I know the general state of the trade, and the value of machinery in the district.

4208. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have you any statement to make as to the wages you pay in your factory?—I have a few memoranda which I made hastily just before I came away from home.

4209. What is about the average of wages that you pay in your factory?—I have a series here of about 10 or 11; the first name earned in three weeks 4 *l.* 19 *s.* 5½ *d.*; the next name 3 *l.* 11 *s.*

4210. For what time?—Three weeks. The next 3 *l.*, the next 2 *l.* 19 *s.* 3 *d.*

4211. For three weeks?—For three weeks. The next 3 *l.* 7 *s.* 8 *d.*, the next 4 *l.* 10 *s.*

4212. Then is the average of each workman upwards of 20 *s.* a week?—I should say so. (*The Witness delivered in two papers* (A.) *and* (B.)) *Vide* Appendix.

4213. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] That is, working in the factory with wide frames?—With wide frames, net wages.

4214. Mr. *Gardner.*] You do not employ any middleman in your factory, do you?—No.

4215. These are paid upon the net system?—No, those are the net receipts after deductions for frame rents and charges are made.

4216. You deduct rents and charges in your factory?—We do.

4217. At what rate?—According to the size of the machine.

4218. How much in the shilling?—It is generally regulated by the size of the machine. For instance, 30 inches or 45, or wider.

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4219. But supposing a man to earn 20 *s.* a week, what would that man's gross wages be?—I cannot speak positively to that.

4220. What sum would represent the rent and charges?—An average of from 4 *s.* to 5 *s.*

4221. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have had some experience of frames?—Yes.

4222. From your experience what do you say is the profit derived from frames after the expenses are deducted, and the wear and tear, and so on?—Narrow frames, for many years past, have not paid any profit at all, but have involved a great loss; I had mine revalued two or three years ago, and struck off 1,900 *l.* from their value.

4223. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are not engaged in the manufacture of stockings at all?—Not at all, scarcely.

4224. Mr. *Biggs.*] It has been stated to the Committee that the profits derived from frames is from 100 to 200 per cent.; does your judgment confirm that opinion?—No.

4225. What do you think is the average profit derived from narrow frames?—I do not think they have paid any profit at all of late years.

4226. Mr. *Gardner.*] You are not anxious to increase the number of your own frames?—I do not intend to repair another of the narrow frames.

4227. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You will turn your attention more to the wide frames?—Yes.

4228. And you will necessarily inquire into the manufacture which Mr. Corah speaks of, I suppose?—Not necessarily; I do not believe in steam power.

4229. Do you know whether there are any masters working upon the net system in factories in Leicester?—Not to my knowledge; there may be.

4230. Do you know Preston & Company?—Yes; I have heard they have adopted the net system.

4231. Do you know for what length of time they have done so?—I cannot say; it is several years since I heard of its adoption; whether it is continued or not I am not prepared to say.

4232. The difficulty of introducing the net system into the villages would be that you have no security for the frame working to your own work, I suppose?—Precisely.

4233. But that objection does not apply to frames under your own eye, and in your own factory?—No.

4234. Then what difficulty is there in introducing the net system into a factory?—There is no difficulty, I think, in it, but the workmen are generally content with the present state of things. The reason why frame rents continue to prevail in factories is the general usage which has been so long established.

4235. Lord *J. Manners.*] When you say that of late years you have made no profit on narrow frames, do you include the 1 *s.* a week rent?—Yes, I do.

4236. Mr. *Ingham.*] When you say that no profit has been derived from them, you mean nothing beyond the common interest of the money?—I question very much whether they have even paid that in many cases.

4237. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What has that arisen from?—The tendency to develope large machinery has depressed the value and the utility of the narrow frames and thrown them frequently out of employment, besides which they cannot produce goods at the same price.

4238. Does it arise from their not being constantly employed?—Their not being constantly employed is one main feature.

4239. When a frame is not employed for 50 weeks it does not pay rent for 50 weeks?—It only pays for a portion of the time.

4240. It is, then, because the frames have not been employed that they have not paid?—And because they are partly superseded; their value is gone down very much.

4241. If you are receiving 1 *s.* a week rent for a frame, which you state to be of the value of from 3 *l.* to 9 *l.*—say an average of 6 *l.*—that is a large interest, even taking repairs into consideration; I presume, therefore, that when you say they do not pay, it is because they are not fully employed?—Because of their decrease in value.

4242. But from what cause have they decreased in value; they have been sold for many years, have they not, at from 3 *l.* to 5 *l.* or 6 *l.*?—Not for many years.

4243. How

4243. How many?—A very few years.

4244. Seven or 10?—They have been gradually decreasing in value very much for the last 15 years.

4245. When you speak of their not being remunerative, that has reference rather to their non-employment, has it not, than to the rent of 1 *s.* a week charged for the rent of a frame worth from 3 *l.* to 9 *l.*?—It has reference to their non-employment and the constantly decreasing value of them as machinery.

4246. But what decrease has there been in the value of frames within the last 10 or 15 years, because it was given in evidence before the Commissioner that frames were sold at 3 *l.* or 4 *l.* in 1845, that is 10 years ago?—That might be so, but when you speak of a frame, that is a very indefinite term; frames are worth money according to their condition.

4247. A carcase would be worth about 3*l.*, or 2*l.* 10*s.*, would it not?—No, it would not be worth more than 35*s.*

4248. Then what would it take to put that frame in workable order?—Perhaps 6*l.* or 7*l.*; it would depend upon the gauge.

4248. That would make it 8*l.*, or 7*l.* 10*s.*?—Somewhere thereabouts.

4250. Is not 1 *s.* a week, if the frame is constantly employed, a very good rent?—Yes.

4251. A large rent?—Yes.

4252. Then it is because they are not constantly employed that you think they are not remunerative?—Yes, and their not being constantly employed involves greatly increased expense; whenever frames stand still they require work to be done at them before they can again resume work.

4253. How long do you find a frame will work without any important repairs?—It will depend on how it is worked and used; perhaps four or five years.

4254. Do you not, when they are in constant employment, sometimes find them last much longer than that?—Yes; it depends very much on the workers, and on their not changing hands too often.

4255. Mr. *Biggs.*] Are those frames generally employed on worsted or cotton?—Either, interchangeably.

4256. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose you were compelled to introduce the net system into your factory, would that have any effect, do you think, upon the earnings of your workmen?—I think it would not improve their earnings; I think it would probably act prejudicially to them.

4257. But the workmen who are agitating for a legislative interference are of opinion that it would raise their wages, I suppose?—I think not generally; those who are agitating say so; I do not know what they think.

4258. They would not agitate, would they, if they thought that legislation would put them in the same position?—I do not know; we always have some trading agitation about Leicester, and in most other places I daresay.

4259. *Chairman.*] I think you say the wear of a frame depends a good deal upon the good usage of it?—It does.

4260. Are you ever in the habit of returning any portion of the rent to those who use it well, as an encouragement to them?—Such a thing is not expected.

4261. Would it not be an advantage to you if some encouragement were given to those who use their frames well, over those who use them badly?—I cannot say.

4262. It would be an advantage to you as a frame owner, would it not, to give encouragement in cases of that kind?—We always prefer to retain those hands who do use their machinery well, and the kind of encouragement we give them is to give them a preference in employment.

4263. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do you not think that manufacturers themselves are the best judges which of their workmen they ought to reward?—Yes.

4264. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do or do not frames go longer in your branch than in the wrought-hose branch?—I think so.

4265. When you say the frames pay 1 *s.* a week rent, do you mean the Committee to understand that that is all clear profit?—Certainly not; we have to keep the machinery in repair.

4266. How much of the 1 *s.* a week do you think is profit, after taking into account the wear and tear and the expense of repairs?—It would depend on various accidental circumstances; but it cannot be half profit.

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4267. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think that there are a greater number of narrow frames in existence than are required for the work that there is for them?—There are always narrow frames unemployed.

4268. Are there a considerable number of them?—There are more narrow frames than there are hands to work them, I believe.

4269. If they are so abundant, how is it that the workmen continue to pay 1 *s.* a week rent for them instead of getting possession of them themselves?—Because they could not get work for them if they had them.

4270. Does it not seem natural that, considering there is so great a superfluity of these frames, the advantage of their cheapness should go, in some degree, to the workmen?—The workmen have not so many frames as they had some years ago.

4271. And to what do you ascribe that circumstance?—To the difficulty of employing them.

4272. That is to say, employment will not be given to a workman having a frame, because he would then pay no rent for it?—Certainly.

4273. Would it not be a more natural state of things in such a condition of the trade that the workmen should have the advantage of the cheapness of the frame, and possess himself of it, and so avoid the rent?—Such does not happen to be the case; the machinery belongs to the manufacturers.

4274. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have been in business for 25 years?—Yes.

4275. Can you give us any idea of the present condition of the population employed in this branch of industry, as compared with its condition in former years?—Some part of the framework-knitting branch is less remunerative than it used to be; other parts yield higher rates of wages by far than they did 25 or 30 years ago.

4276. Which branches yield more than they did 25 or 30 years ago?—The workers in wide frames and fancy hosiery.

4277. And which department is more depressed than it used to be?—I think the wrought-hose branch.

4278. Does that represent a majority of the population?—Perhaps it does; it is the largest branch.

4279. To what do you attribute the depression in that branch?—To the introduction of large frames.

4280. Do you attribute it also to any other cause?—Changes in the style of goods that are required chiefly.

4281. Expensive hosiery is not much worn now?—Not so much as it was formerly.

4282. Has foreign competition had anything to do with it?—I think not; still we have a good deal of foreign competition.

4283. Do you find your trade influenced by the price of provisions in this country?—Yes, greatly.

4284. How?—Whenever provisions are high we always find trade bad, inasmuch as the operative classes are the best customers; they are the largest consumers of our manufactured goods, when they have the means.

Mr. *George Loveday*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. G. Loveday.

4285. Mr. *Gardner.*] WHAT is your business?—I am what is termed a middleman, or an undertaker.

4286. For whom do you work?—Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Harris, Messrs. Warner & Company, and several other manufacturers.

4287. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Where do you reside?—At Wigston.

4288. Mr. *Gardner.*] That is a village near Leicester, I believe?—Yes.

4289. How long have you been a middleman?—Thirty years.

4290. Are your hands at present well employed?—Tolerably well employed at the present time.

4291. In case of short work, do you spread your work over the hosiers' frames, and your own as well?—I do.

4292. Are you in the habit of taking full rent and charges when you have only short work to give?—Never.

4293. Are you in the habit of taking rent and charges in cases of sickness?—In no instance.

4294. Do

4294. Do you think that if the present system of frame-rents and charges were abolished, the hands would be benefited by that change?—I do not.

4295. What reasons have you for coming to that conclusion?—I come to that conclusion, for this reason: that, if frame-rents were abolished, and the system were adopted that has been recommended by some persons, there would be a reduction in the price of labour; and that being the case, the best of my hands, and those I value the most, would have to pay the most; those that produce the most are certainly the most valuable to me, at present; but they would be most dissatisfied if that system was to be brought into operation, while the indolent and less valuable hands, if there was any profit at all, would be the only parties that would derive it.

4296. Sir *H. Halford.*] What system do you speak of?—The system that has been talked about among the agitators is, that there should be net wages paid, but they are obliged to admit (and I have it from the testimony of Buckby and Elliott themselves) that the manufacturers would reduce the price of labour equal to the rent.

4297. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You think their testimony is good?—I had it as their statement. I consider that they, having interested themselves the most in the question, are in possession of the best information with regard to it; and if any testimony is good, I should consider theirs to be so.

4298. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean that, according to their own showing, the position of the workmen would not be improved by any change?—I do.

4299. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is to say, by a system of net wages?—By a system that they have themselves told me would be likely to be brought into operation, that if the frame-rent was done away with, there would be a reduction in the price of labour equal to the amount of rent.

4300-1. Do you understand Buckby and Elliott to be advocates of a net system?—I do.

4302. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to mean that these agitators admit that if the change they propose were brought about, the wages of the workmen would not be at all raised?—No; they told me they expected they would be reduced equal to rent.

4303. Sir *H. Halford.*] But you do not exactly understand what the system which they propose is, do you?—Only from their own testimony; they told me themselves they should suppose the manufacturers would reduce the price of labour equal to the amount of rent for the machinery.

4304. Mr. *Gardner.*] Leaving the workmen precisely in the same position as they are in now?—Yes.

4305. Sir *H. Halford.*] Supposing no rent was demanded?—Yes.

4306. Lord *J. Manners.*] And did you understand them to say, although that was their opinion, they still in the cause of the workpeople advocated a change?—Yes.

4307. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is their reason, do you think, for advocating this change, if it is to be of no use?—I cannot tell what can be their reason.

4308. Mr. *Ingham.*] The question put to you was this; have you turned your mind to what would be the effect upon the workpeople if there was still rent to be charged for frames; but instead of its being recovered by stoppage from wages, to be recoverable only as any other ordinary debt; it would give the same remuneration for the use of the frame to the owner of it, and yet avoid what the workmen complain of, the vexation of an actual stoppage from their wages; if they had their wages paid to them in full, they afterwards paying the frame rent as they would any other demand upon them?—It would be no advantage, and my hands do not complain of the present system.

4309. They do not complain that it is recovered from them by a deduction from their wages?—They do not complain of paying the rent; they prefer paying the rent rather than be subject to a reduction in the price paid for their labour equal to the rent.

4310. Would it content the workmen if the frame rent were recoverable by ordinary process of law, but not recoverable as a deduction from the amount of wages?—I cannot say.

4311. Do you hear them complain at all of being paid short, and that they would rather have their wages paid in full?—I have never heard them make a complaint of that kind.

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4312. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that if such a system as that which has been suggested were introduced, the effect of it would be that the rent would not be paid in many cases?—Certainly.

4313. It would not be secure?—No.

4314. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Why would it be insecure?—Because the workmen are not bound to us; when I return with the material, after taking in their work, perhaps they are gone; there is that independence about them, I have no control over them; if the rent had gone on for two or three weeks, and if it were recoverable only by process of law, after they had received the money for their work, probably they would be hands of mine no more.

4315. You think that dismissal would not be a sufficient punishment?—No; when trade is good they can get work in an hour, it is so plentiful, by making application to the manufacturer.

4316. Is that the case at all times?—When trade is in a pretty good state.

4317. But when trade is not in a good state, is work so abundant at that period?—They feel a good deal of independence, so far as the middlemen are concerned; and if I were to attempt any imposition, they would not stay with me another day.

4318. What agreement do you make with a workman when you engage to employ him; you find him a frame, I suppose?—I find him a frame, and I find him work at the warehouse price; that is at the price given to me by the manufacturer; he agrees with me to pay the same rent that I pay to the manufacturer, and when he has paid me the same rent that I pay to the manufacturer, I then charge him according to the width of the frame, 3 *d.*, 6 *d.*, 9 *d.*, or 1 *s.*; that includes the whole of the charges that he is subject to.

4319. Do you mean per week?—Per week.

4320. Threepence?—Threepence upon some descriptions of machinery, and 6 *d.* upon others.

4321. Up to what?—Ninepence on some, and 1 *s.* on others.

4322. A shilling is the highest?—A shilling is the highest.

4323. And 3 *d.* the lowest?—Yes.

4324. Will you be good enough to describe what sort of machinery it is that you let at 3 *d.*?—It is a wrought hose-frame.

4325. Of what gauge?—I have a charge of 3 *d.* upon it; that is in addition to the rent.

4326. You are now speaking of your charges?—I am now speaking of charges.

4327. Exclusive of rent?—Exclusive of rent.

4328. What is the rent?—The hands pay me the same rent as I pay to the hosier. If I take a frame at 1 *s.*, the hands pay me a shilling; and then for employing them, bringing material backwards and forwards from Leicester, being responsible for it, and giving them work out every morning, I have 3 *d.* a week from them.

4329. Do you give the work out to the men in the shop every morning?—Every morning.

4330. How many persons work in that shop?—Thirty-six men and women.

4331. This is at Wigston?—Yes.

4332. That shop belongs to whom?—To myself.

4333. It is a shop you have built, and there are some 36 people employed in it; is that so?—Yes.

4334. What are the other charges made to those men besides the rent of 1 *s.* a week for each frame?—The 3 *d.* includes the whole of the charges for a narrow frame; they go on a graduated scale, according to the machine, as you will see from the papers I beg to present to the Committee. (*The Witness delivered in a Paper* "C.")

Vide Appendix.

4335. Mr. *Gardner.*] Can you tell us why the charges on some kinds of frames are higher than on others?—The frames are wider and of more value; the hands can produce a greater amount of work; they can earn a great deal more money. I am subject also to a greater weight of material in bringing it backwards and forwards from Leicester.

4336. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You say you have 36 hands working in this shop?—Yes.

4337. Is

4337. Is there any gas in the shop?—No.

4338. How is it lighted?—By candles.

4339. Do you charge for the candles that are used?—No.

4340. Do you charge for standing room?—Threepence includes the whole of the charges the operatives are subject to.

4341. Threepence includes the charge for taking in, giving out, and for standing room, and everything?—The whole charge.

4342. Threepence a week?—Threepence a week for that description of machinery.

4343. Up to how much?—That is the charge on all the narrow frames: what we term a 15-inch frame.

4344. What do you charge on a wider frame?—For a wider frame, that is, perhaps, a 20 inches, I have 6*d.*, and for that which is about 30 inches I have 9*d.*

4345. Independent of the rent?—Independent of the rent.

4346. And what sort of a frame is that which you charge 1*s.* for?—From 40 to 50 inches.

4347. You say there are no other charges than those which you have now stated?—There is no other charge on their work.

4348. Who does the winding?—Most of those who are in my shop bring their own boys or girls, where they have them; and the others, if they do not think well to wind their own material, they employ winders themselves, and pay them.

4349. And this system of yours, working in a shop, gives satisfaction to the men, does it?—I put it to them whether, if a change were to take place, they considered they should be benefited by it, and they told me distinctly that they did not consider that the system that was talked about so freely by the agitators would benefit them at all; and that if that was the only benefit the Act could confer upon them, they would rather remain as they were.

4350–1. You told them what that Act proposed to confer upon them?—I only told them as I was told it by Buckby & Elliot.

4352. What did you tell them?—That they supposed that if the frame rents were abolished, there would be a reduction in the price paid for labour, equal to the rent that they had to pay for the frames.

4353. That is, that they would derive no benefit, directly or indirectly, from the change?—I told them distinctly what I have now stated to the Committee, that it was said to me by Buckby & Elliot, that that would probably be the consequence; I did not tell them that they would derive no benefit from it; they might draw what conclusions they pleased. I told them no more than I have stated; I did not terrify them; I merely told them what Buckby & Elliot had told me.

4354. Do you believe that if the frame rents were done away with, the workmen would derive no benefit from it whatever?—I cannot see how they could derive any benefit from it; I do not know what system would be brought into operation.

4355. You heard the evidence that was given a short time ago?—Yes.

4356. By Mr. Billson?—Yes.

4357. In which he said that all his men were earning 20*s.* a week on an average on the factory system; do your men earn 20*s.* a week on the average?—His men do not work on the factory system; he takes rent from them.

4358. It is a factory system, nevertheless?—That is the system that my hands are working on now.

4359. What wages do your men get now?—A first-hand I have gets now 1*l.*; that is the amount of his earnings; his rent is 2*s.* 6*d.*; then I have 1*s.*, including all charges, for taking in his work, and superintending; that leaves him 16*s.* 6*d.* net.

4360. That is a first-rate workman?—No, not the best of my workmen; I have taken them as they stand in my book. The next that I have is a young man, 17 years of age; he makes 17*s.*, first hand; then there is 2*s.* 6*d.* deducted for rent, and 1*s.* for charges, which leaves him 13*s.* 6*d.*; the next is the father of this young man; his earnings are 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; his rent is 2*s.* 6*d.*, and his charges 1*s.*, leaving him 19*s.* The next is a married man, 32 years of age; his earnings are 19*s.* 4*d.*; this is a narrow frame, but a rib frame, a 15-inches

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frame, but with a machine; his rent is 1*s.* 3*d.*, and his charges are 6*d.*, leaving him 17*s.* 7*d.* The next is an old man, 66 years of age, working in a rib frame; his earnings are 18*s.*, his rent is 2*s.*, and his charges 6*d.*, leaving him 15*s.* 6*d.* The next is a man 25 years of age; his full earnings are 1*l.* 5*s.*, his rent 2*s.* 6*d.*, and his charges 1*s.*, leaving him 1*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*

4361. Mr. *Gardner.*] What kind of frames are these?—The first is a plain shirt frame, wide; the next is a plain shirt frame, wide; the next is a plain shirt frame, wide; the next a ribbed hose narrow frame.

4362. What wages are produced to the workman on that narrow frame?—The amount of wages that I paid to this man was 17*s.* 7*d.* net; this is the average for the last six weeks, as regular as can be.

4363. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you many of these narrow frames in your shop?—I should think I have eight or nine; they are ribbed frames, not making a wrought hose.

4364. Have you any making wrought hose?—Yes.

4365. Mr. *Gardner.*] What wages do you give on the wrought hose?—This is the lowest scale of wages; Anne York, a married woman, labourer's wife.

4366. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What is her age?—Thirty-two; her earnings are 6*s.* 9*d.*; being a married woman, I charge her 8*d.* rent, and 4*d.* for taking in; that leaves her 5*s.* 9*d.*

4367. Sir *H. Halford.*] She works in your shop?—At her own house; I charge her 1*s.*; 8*d.* for rent, and 4*d.* for taking in.

4368. Mr. *Biggs.*] In addition to working the frame, she attends to her domestic duties?—Yes.

4369. Sir *H. Halford.*] Has she a husband?—Yes, her husband is a labourer; and she does this work, adding thereby very much to the comfort of her family.

4370. Mr. *Gardner.*] Besides working at the frame, she attends to her cooking, and other household duties?—Yes.

4371. How many children has she?—Three, I believe.

4372. She can earn 5*s.* 9*d.* a week, besides attending to her domestic duties?—Yes.

4373. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do any of her children work at the frame?—No; they are not old enough.

4374. Now give us the earnings of a man who is working in the same way in one of those narrow frames?—William Gamble, an old man.

4375. Mr. *Gardner.*] How old?—Sixty-eight years of age; his earnings are 4*s.* 9*d.*

4376. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is at his own house?—Yes, at his own house; rent, 8*d.*, charges 4*d.*, leaving him 3*s.* 9*d.*; that is a plain hose frame; I have but five or six of them.

4377. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Now give us the wages earned by an able-bodied man working in the same way?—I have no able-bodied men working that description of machinery.

4378. Mr. *Gardner.*] Of course able-bodied men can get better employment than others?—They will not work in this description of machinery; it is worked in by old men and women.

4379. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Can you give us the earnings of a woman in middle life employed constantly at her frame?—The next that I have on my list is Anne Chaney, a married woman, a stocking-maker's wife, with a family; she attends to her duty; her full earnings are 6*s.* 9½*d.*; the rent is 1*s.*, and charges 4*d.* leaving her 5*s.* 5½*d.*

4380. Mr. *Gardner.*] Besides earning that sum she attends to the duties of her house and family?—Yes.

4381. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Can you state what are the earnings of a woman who is fully occupied in the frame from morning till night?—I have: Alice Grant.

4382. Mr. *Gardner.*] Does she work from Monday morning till Saturday night?—She has no other employment; but she very seldom works on a Monday; I think never. I suppose she does her own washing and mending, and so on.

4383. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What does she earn?—Her earnings are 8*s.* 1*d.*, her rent is 1*s.*, and charges 4*d.*

4384. How

4384. How much does that leave her net?—That leaves 6 *s.* 9 *d.*

4385. Mr. *Gardner.*] You say this young woman does not work on Monday; is that the case?—She does not work on Monday.

4386. Or on Tuesday?—She generally begins on Tuesday morning.

4387. Does she work on Saturday?—Yes, about half the day.

4388. Then she works, generally, the whole of Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and half of Saturday?—Yes.

4389. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What is the reason why she does not work on the Monday?—I suppose, in fact I know, she is a single woman, and that she has her washing, and mending, and other things, to attend to.

4390. At what time on Monday are materials generally given out to her?—She does not come to work on the Monday.

4391. At what time would the materials be given out to her if she did come?—I always serve my hands at seven or eight o'clock each morning during the week; they do not all come at one time.

4392. She does not work more than half Saturday?—No.

4393. What is the reason of that?—I do not know any other reason than that she has had enough work, and is tired of it, and gives over.

4394. Does she bring her goods to you?—No; she is a footer; she has nothing to do with bringing in goods.

4395. *Chairman.*] Do you keep a shop at Wigston?—No.

4396. You have no shop for the sale of bread, or flour, or things of that sort, have you?—No.

4397. Mr. *Gardner.*] Had you ever?—I had.

4398. Why did you give it up?—Because it was unprofitable to myself, and I found it also gave rise to so much difficulty in the management of my hands, that I was compelled to give it up. They got into my debt, and I had no means of recovering what they owed me.

4399. Lord *J. Manners.*] When did you give it up?—Two years ago; I drew out as steadily as I could.

4400. Mr. *Gardner.*] Did you work then on a kind of truck system?—I did.

4401. But you found it unprofitable?—I did, in two ways. I found that the men got so much in my debt that I positively lost more than I should get by the shop; besides which, I never could get such good attention to the work, or such good work done by the men. I can get a dozen shirts of more value to me by a shilling a dozen, owing to the better style in which they are made.

4402. In fact you found that the system of truck was a convenience to your workmen and a loss to yourself?—It was a convenience to their families, but not much to themselves; families were frequently supplied with articles of food which they would not have had but for that.

4403. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you mean that the workmen would have got drunk with the money?—In holiday weeks, and at other times, when the workmen got drunk, families used to come to the shop and get supplied with food, which they would not have had the opportunity of being supplied with if it had not been for that shop; but I found it an injury to myself, and therefore voluntarily gave it up.

4404. The family obtained things that were useful to them which otherwise they could not have got?—Yes, and never paid me for them.

4405. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you mean the Committee to understand that the people lament the closing of these truck shops?—I do not think they do, and certainly I do not.

4406. They are rather glad of it than otherwise, are they not?—I am very well satisfied that I have closed my shop, and I think that my hands are too.

4407. *Chairman.*] What number of frames are under your direction?—About 50.

4408. You say a portion of them are Mr. Mitchell's?—They are.

4409. What number of them are Mr. Mitchell's?—I should think about eight.

4410. Are any of these frames your own property, or are they all the property of the hosiers?—Some of them are my own property.

4411. What proportion of them?—I should suppose about half.

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4412. Is it not the custom for the hosiers to give out only work sufficient for their own frames?—No, it is not the custom to do so; Mr. Mitchell knows what number I have of his frames, and I have twice as much work as would employ his frames.

4413. From Mr. Mitchell?—Yes.

4414. Then Mr. Mitchell gives you out a larger quantity of work than you have frames for?—Considerably.

4415. Is there a man named Samuel Hurst in your employment?—There is.

4416. I see he was examined by the Commissioner?—He was.

4417. In Question No. 6829 he is asked this: "You say that the employers of Wigston do not work for themselves, but are undertakers; what do they charge frame rent?" His answer is, "They charge us 1*s.* for a hosier's, and 2*s.* for a double hose, that is, a two-hose frame, besides their own charges; their taking in, and such like." He is then asked, "What are the particulars of their charges?" He says, "They charge 4*d.* for taking in, and 1*d.* standing, that is, on a single frame; winding 5*d.*; needles 3*d.*; seaming 1*d.* in the 1*s.*;" is that correct?—No. In the first place, there is no winding; I never find them needles; there is a new kind of needles introduced into the trade, steel needles, and a good hand will not break a pennyworth in a week.

4418. That statement which he made to the Commissioner in 1844 was not true?—It was not. I challenged the correctness of it, and read the report to him in my own warehouse last week.

4419. Does he admit that it is not true?—He is obliged to admit it; when I put the question to him he stated he understood that to be the general system of the trade, but it is not my system; and I do not believe it is a system that exists in Wigston.

4420. Is William Wyatt employed by you?—William Wyatt at the present moment is employed by me.

4421. He was employed at that time in the ribbed-hose branch, was he not?—He is employed in the ribbed-hose branch now, but it is a very different description of hose to what it was then.

4422. He was asked, in Question No. 6876, "What are your outgoings on that?" and his answer was, "2*s.* 8*d.* the frame, 8*d.* winding, and 4½*d.* the needles;" was he correct in that statement?—He did not work to me at that time, consequently I cannot answer, but he works to me now, both he and his boy; his boy foots his hose. I pay him 1*l.* 4*s.* 11*d.*; his rent is 2*s.* 6*d.*, and charges 1*s.*; 1*l.* 1*s.* 5*d.* he has to receive.

4423. Mr. *Ingham.*] Is that the father, or the son, or both?—The father and son; the little boy, who has learnt in the frame about nine months, foots his hose.

4424. *Chairman.*] You say that the lowest outgoings, beyond the frame rent are 3*d.* up to 1*s.* a week?—Yes.

4425. And that includes everything?—That includes everything.

4426. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you adhere to this statement, which you appear to have made at the public meeting: "He had told them at the last meeting of his charges of 3*d.*, 6*d.*, and 1*s.* per frame, which had to cover time, trouble, carriage and responsibility, and if Sir Henry Halford or Sir Joshua Walmsley would come and do it for less he would give up his place to those gentlemen"?—That is quite true. This statement I made at the meeting.

4427. *Chairman.*] Does Hurst pay nothing for seaming?—I have nothing to do with his seaming; he brings his work to me, and I pay him the money. I make no charge of the kind; I merely take the amount of work they make.

4428. He says, the charge is 1*d.* for standing, 4*d.* for taking in, and 5*d.* for winding?—He has his frame at home, and consequently I have no claim of anything of the kind.

4429. Lord *J. Manners.*] Perhaps it was the case at that time, and is not the case now?—No, it was not the case then.

4430. *Chairman.*] Are his outgoings precisely the same now as they were then?—I can only say that, so far as I make a charge now, they are.

4431. Have you made any difference in your charges since 1844?—No; I will tell you what I charge him now. I charge him 1*s.* for the rent of his frame,

frame, and 6*d.* for taking in his work; that includes the whole of the charges that he pays me.

4432. Do you receive from the hosiers a sufficient quantity of work to employ not only the 25 frames you have from them, but the 25 frames of your own?—I receive more at the present time.

4433. More than sufficient to keep all the 50 frames going six days in the week?—If the hands were disposed to work six days in the week, but I find that it is a benefit to the hands, and they are much inclined to adopt that course, to take their Mondays for the cultivation of some very nice plots of land they have; the most of them in Wigston have a third of an acre; 60 acres are let out in allotments; they have about one-third of an acre, and Mondays are principally employed in their cultivation; very few of them work at the frame on Monday.

4434. Is it not the custom when trade is slack to give out work later in the week, say on Tuesday or Wednesday, so that the workmen are prevented from working the beginning of the week in consequence of not having the material to work with?—By no means; there is no advantage in doing that.

4435. Lord *J. Manners.*] Have you ever done it yourself?—Never.

4436. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean that those workmen whose average wages you have just described as about 17 *s.* 9 *d.* a week are able, besides earning that sum of money, to devote one day in the week to the cultivation of their allotments?—Yes, and I do not think they do less work for it; if they were to sit at the frame the whole week it would be injurious to their health, and by a change of exercise they are better prepared to work the other days in the week than they would be if they were always working at the same thing.

4437. *Chairman.*] Are the whole of your 50 frames in full work at present?—Yes.

4438. Do you keep them always in full work?—No.

4439. Lord *J. Manners.*] What happens when you have to put them on half work?—There is less work given out.

4440. It is spread over the same time?—Not in all instances; when I can I let a frame stand, but some of the hands will meet me in this way; they will say, "I have served you as well and faithfully as another hand has served you, and why should I be turned out of work while there is any? give me the same portion of work as my neighbours, and regulate the charges in proportion to what I pay when I am in full work. That is the invariable system they act on, and I have the testimony of my hands to that fact (*producing a paper*).

4441. Will you read that paper, if you please?—"We, the undersigned, in the employ of Mr. Loveday, give our testimony to two facts, namely, that we only pay rent and charges in proportion to the amount of work we have; secondly, that we pay no rent or charges in times of sickness. Witness our hands, J. Mould, John Cawthorn, William Iliffe, A. York, Ann Cheney, William Cawthorn, Caleb Cheney, Ezra Mudduner, John Walker, Samuel Hurst, William Harding, Elizabeth Mould, Alice Grant, Samuel Mould, William Humberstone, William Wheat, Thomas Phipps, Thomas Wyatt, Thomas Boulter, worked to Mr. Loveday 18 years; William Harrison, John Stanyan, Thomas Wyatt, John Vann, worked 12 years; Mr. George Loveday Wigston, William Evatt, William Warburton, worked 17 years; William Ross, Benjamin Warburton.

4442. *Chairman.*] You never take a week's rent unless you give out a week's work?—Never.

4443. Do you pay to the manufacturers the weekly rent for the frame, irrespective of the work they give out?—I pay them a weekly rent for the frame.

4444. Then when work is slack you are a loser by the frames if you only charge the workmen according to the work you give out to them?—I do not gain much by them, but then I keep my hands together.

4445. If you pay a shilling a week to the hosier, and the workman only works four days out of the six, and you charge him 8*d.*, you would lose fourpence a week by him?—Yes, but then I spread the work; the workmen would rather have that than that some of them should be thrown wholly out of employment.

4446. Do you obtain from the workmen, somehow or other, the same rent (that is, a shilling a week) that you pay to the manufacturer?—I take it as a matter of chance; if the manufacturer gives me out as much work as will

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employ his own frames, I pay him his full rent, spreading the work over my own frames as well, and charging the workmen in proportion to the amount of work they do when they are in full employment.

4447. Lord *J. Manners.*] If I understand you, you do not in all cases pay the full rent to the manufacturer?—I do not in all cases; when they do not give out as much work as would employ their frames, I do not pay them the full rent.

4448. *Chairman.*] You have a deduction then from the rent you pay to the manufacturer, if he does not give out six days' work?—If there is not sufficient work for his frames for the week, I have a deduction of rent from him.

4449. Then you do not regularly pay for the 25 frames, you have 25 *s.* a week?—No.

4450. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have you any explanation to offer with reference to the apparently monstrous cases that have been brought forward by Mr. Buckby and others. Mr. Buckby says in his evidence, "There is one case in which a man earns 12 *s.* 6 *d.*, out of which is deducted 10 *s.*, leaving net to the workman 2 *s.* 6 *d.*" "There is another case of a man earning 9 *s.* 6 *d.*, out of which 8 *s.* is deducted, and 1 *s.* 6 *d.* left." "I can mention another case in which 9 *s.* 2 *d.* was earned, and 7 *s.* 6 *d.* deducted, leaving 1 *s.* 8 *d.*; that was all the work the man had to do, he could not have any more"?—I met Buckby and Elliot upon the question; I asked them how it was that such statements came forth from them without explanation. I said there must be something that needed explanation, for if the parties only earned what Mr. Buckby stated, they being subject to such an amount of charges they would be better to be out of work altogether; they would be better without it than with it; they told me that perhaps it might be in one week that they would be subject to these charges, and that the next week they might earn a considerable amount of money, and therefore it would not do for them to throw themselves out of work in such a case.

4451. Mr. Buckby does not give the names in any one of these cases I have mentioned, but did you make any inquiries as to who the parties were at all?—I asked Buckby why he did not give the names, and I told him that if such things existed as he stated, they deserved exposure, and that I thought if he was honourable he would give their names. He said the reason why he did not give their names was, that perhaps it might turn out to their injury, if he did. I gave a challenge to Buckby and Elliot upon the question, and I told them that if they had brought such extreme cases forward, I certainly could select extreme cases on the other side; that I thought neither one nor the other was a fair average of men's earnings, and that if men had been imposed upon in the manner they stated, the names of the parties ought to be given up to the public, so that those parties might bear the blame.

4452. Did Mr. Buckby upon that or any other occasion identify to you any of these extraordinary circumstances?—No.

4453. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are you aware that Mr. Buckby offered to give to the Committee the name of every individual to whom he referred?—I am not; this was a conversation between me and them.

4454. *Chairman.*] You say you have given up keeping a shop yourself; are there any other undertakers in Wigston who keep shops at the present moment?—I believe they have all given it up; I do not think there is one now.

4455. I think you say that in no instance do you take frame rent where a workman is ill or otherwise disabled from working?—Yes. I have no recollection of taking it in any instance.

4456. Mr. Mitchell, then, you think, is incorrect in this respect, when in answer to the question, "Is it the custom that they exact the full rent of the frame when the framework-knitter is sick or otherwise disabled from working?" He says, "That is frequently, and I might almost say generally, the case"?—It is never practised in our district; and the paper which I only just now produced to the Committee bears testimony to that effect.

4457. Is the practice which you pursue general in Wigston?—Yes, it is the practice there; and I think that if any persons were to adopt the system which Mr. Mitchell states in his evidence they would be scouted through the place.

4458. That is, if they were to charge in time of sickness?—Yes.

4459. There was another question put by the Noble Lord on my left (Lord John

ohn Manners), to Mr. Mitchell, to this effect, "I understand you to say that hen a man is employed, say for half a week, the rent for the whole week is ıbtracted from his wages?" And the answer which Mr. Mitchell gives to ıat question is, "It is." Now is that at all usual in Wigston?—It is not at ll usual in Wigston; and I do not know that such a practice prevails in any ther locality. I know it is not the practice in the place where I live.

4460. Lord *J. Manners.*] You undertake for Mr. Mitchell?—Yes.

4461. Have you ever had any conversation with Mr. Mitchell on these oints?—I have not; Mr. Mitchell is a very reserved gentleman. I have had onversations on the subject with his manager, Mr. Craig, and his other ıanager, Mr. Austin; Mr. Mitchell very seldom speaks to any of his work-ıen, to have any conversation with them; he leaves the management of them) his two managers.

4462. Have you any objection to state the upshot of your communication ith the two gentlemen you have named?—There was nothing very definite; ıey understood that I had an order to come before the Committee of the Iouse of Commons, and I asked them whether they had any statement to ıake that could throw any light upon the subject, and they said they had not; showed them plainly what was our custom in Wigston, and placed before ıem that which I am pleased to have an opportunity of placing before the ommittee; the easy manner in which the workmen can ascertain the ware-ouse price. I said to them, "You have in Wigston a man working to you ith one frame; you have another working two, another working three, nother four, another five, another seven, and so on; you have one or two of he undertakers; now we have all one price, and if we were not to give our ıen the same price as we have from you, we should be burnt in effigy in the illage at once."

4463. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] And you have all the same charges?—Yes; if I ork to Mr. Mitchell, with 20 frames, there are others that have their ones, wos, and threes; I get no more than they do.

4464. Lord *J. Manners.*] When you had this conversation with those gen-lemen, were you or they aware of the evidence which Mr. Mitchell had given? Not at all.

4465. Was that particular point treated of in the conversation to which you ıave referred?—Nothing was said in reference to Mr. Mitchell's evidence.

4466. Nor as to the practice which he here condemns?—No; I did not now anything of Mr. Mitchell's statement; I had not heard a word of it.

4467. Sir *H. Halford.*] I think you have stated that you have a shop in hich 36 persons are employed; is that so?—Yes.

4468. Are those generally young persons?—No.

4469. There are some young persons, I presume, among them?—There are ome; very few.

4470. Are there persons of both sexes?—There are.

4471. Women and men?—There is a young married woman and her hus-ıand, both of whom work in the shop, and there are two young women; here is a boy who works under his father; the father and son work in two nstances.

4472. Are you in that shop commonly yourself?—Very frequently.

4473. Is there any regular superintendence with regard to the conversation ınd the manner of the people in that shop?—I have a son-in-law who works in the shop, and when I am absent I leave it to his management.

4474. Is there any discipline with regard to the period of their coming and going?—We have no control over them; it would be very desirable if we could.

4475. They come and go when they please?—Yes, except that we lock up ıt a certain time of night.

4476. Lord *J. Manners.*] What time is that?—Ten o'clock in the winter time.

4477. Then there is a good deal of lighting?—Yes; there need not be so much if they would economise their time, and come early in the morning.

4478. How is the lighting paid for?—They pay for it.

4479. How much is paid by them for lighting?—I should think they would burn half-a-pound of candles in a week.

4480. That charge is defrayed by themselves?—Yes.

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4481. Sir *H. Halford.*] Have you ever had occasion to find fault with the demeanor of the parties working in that shop?—No.

4482. As far as you are aware, there is no looseness of behaviour or conversation in it?—I am not aware that there is.

4483. Lord *J. Manners.*] Can you give us an idea of what the lighting would cost a workman in the course of a week?—I should think from 3 *d.* to 3 ½ *d.*

4484. Mr. *Wickham.*] Each individual?—Yes.

4485. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have lived among the framework-knitting population for 30 years?—Yes.

4486. Have any cases of exorbitant charges, such as those stated by Mr. Buckby, fallen within your own knowledge at Wigston, or elsewhere, within that time?—No.

4487. Mr. *Mundy.*] Perhaps your knowledge does not extend much beyond Wigston?—Not much; but so far as I have heard of other places, I am not aware of anything of the sort; I never had a case of the kind come under my own observation.

4488. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think the adoption of the factory system would be a benefit to the hands?—I do not think it would, with the present description of machinery; the superior machinery that is brought into operation now necessarily must be placed in factories; it would not do to send it out to individuals to hold in their own dwelling-houses; the factory system will necessarily become a growing system from that circumstance; and the inferior description of machinery, or the small frames, will, in proportion as the other increases, go out; there is no question about that.

4489. What is the reason why the factory system is not applicable to the case of narrow frames?—Because narrow frames would take up such an amount of room to contain them, and would produce so small a quantity of work, that it would answer no manufacturer's purpose to build a room to place them in.

4490. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What is the difference between a large shop and a factory?—A large shop, such as we have, is placed under our own management; we do not altogether place the single frames there, but we send them out as much as we can, for the same reason as manufacturers do who have large factories belonging to them, and the wider machines we keep in those shops; but a manufacturer who has perhaps four or five hundred of these sort of frames would find it difficult to build a factory to hold them, while, at the same time, we may build a shop that will contain from 30 to 35.

4491. You draw a distinction between a large and a small factory?—Yes; and where there are as many as 400, it would be difficult to place them in a factory.

4492. You have spoken of its being unjust to a good workman to take the same rent from him as you would take from a slow or indifferent workman; what difficulty would there be in charging the same price per dozen to all?—I make but very few hose; it is a thing that does not pay me; I feel but little interest in it, and do not turn my attention to it.

4493. What difficulty, in the case of hose, would there be in paying to the workman a net price per dozen, instead of, as at present, deducting from his wages the numerous charges which are made, and giving him so much more?—There would be a difficulty of this kind: suppose one man did three dozen, and another only one dozen, if I were to take off each dozen what would be equal to the rent, he who had done three dozen would think it a great grievance to have the same amount per dozen taken off his work as was taken off the work of the man who did only one dozen; there would be a most awful demur among the hands.

4494. Why, you have to go to market with your hose at so much a dozen; and if you pay to the skilled workman the same rate as you pay to the one who can only make a smaller quantity, is not that justice?—They would say at once, "Why should I be reduced any more than another hand?" If I have a hand that works to me, and makes one dozen, if I am to take off equal to his rent, I must take off 1 *s.*; if I have another man who does four dozen, I must take off 3 *d.*; then the hand from whom I took off the shilling would make a most awful demur, and say, "Why have I not a right to the same price for my labour as the other man has; it is the same article, and I have a right to be paid the same?" That would be the answer they would make at once.

4495. In

4495. In fact, you would make the skilled workman pay for the unskilled?—If that plan was to be adopted they must.

4496. Mr. *Ingham.*] You are acquainted with Mr. Collins' factory, are you not?—I have never seen Mr. Collins' factory.

4497. You are aware, are you not, that he sometimes worked on the net system, and sometimes on the system of frame rents and charges?—I have heard so.

4498. He makes this statement. He is asked, in Question No. 1256, "Then it was at the request of the workmen, and was not your own doing, that you went back to the rent and charges system?" and he says, "Yes; the reason why I did it was this: the good hands found they were injured by these net wages; they had to draw a line, so that my machinery should pay me about the same as if they had paid rent for the use of it; the more work a hand does the more rent he has to pay; the less work he does the less rent he pays; so that the more work a man did the more he suffered, the less work he did the more he gained. They thought then that they should like to go back to the rent system, and they went on the rent system, and continued so for a year or two." Do you think that that would be the feeling of the workmen; as they now pay the same amount of frame rent, the industrious man pays, of course, less than the idle man upon the amount of work he does?—Yes; this quite agrees with the changes that they seem inclined to make. Hands very seldom seem satisfied with their condition long together; and I am not a bit surprised to find that disposition among Mr. Collins' hands to make these changes.

4499. But the reason why they said they wished to revert to the frame-rent system was, that they thought it a better system for the industrious hands?—So far as my hands are concerned they would rather pay rent for their frames, so that they might secure to themselves the choice of coming to work when they thought proper to work.

4500. Mr. *Gardner.*] You mean the rent system is favourable to the independence of the hands?—I think so, to all intents and purposes; I think the other system would place them very much in the hands of middlemen; if it was left to them to make a contract with the employer, and then to go back to make contracts with the hands, those who were disposed to oppress and take advantage would have ten times greater opportunities of doing so than they have now, for at present they do know what the manufacturers are giving for their work, but then they would have nothing to do with it, and I think they would be open to greater imposition than they are liable to under the present system; that is my opinion.

4501. Will you explain how the men know now exactly at what prices work is given out?—Yes. I will take, for instance, Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Harris; there is one person who works to them holding one frame in our village, another works to them holding three frames, another works to them holding six frames; we will now go on to another holding ten frames. Now many of these hands are in the same village; they have all one price; they make no difference in the price paid for a certain description of article that they give out to be made, so that if a middleman was to endeavour to practice a reduction of price upon these hands, he would soon be exposed.

4502. Your explanation applies only to the case of a village where there are several undertakers working to different houses?—That is the case in most villages; there are few villages where there is any exception to that.

4503. Mr. *Ingham.*] You are speaking of several individuals working to the same house?—Yes.

4504. And knowing what that house pays to one individual, you check the sum that is represented to be paid by another?—Yes, certainly.

4505. Mr. *Biggs.*] The same rule that applies to one place would apply to more than one, would it not, because the workmen meet at the warehouses on the Saturday?—Yes; they would know it at once if anything of that sort were to take place.

4506. Mr. *Gardner.*] What, in your opinion, is the present condition of the frame-work knitters, as compared with their condition formerly?—In our village their condition is very much improved.

4507. Mr. *Biggs.*] Since when?—Within the last 10 years.

4508. Mr. *Gardner.*] To what do you attribute that improvement in their condition?—To two or three important causes: in the first instance, we have

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a great many schools, which have a very beneficial tendency upon the rising generation; we have Sunday schools, where there are 500 children educated every Sunday; we have two more schools, where there are as many as 200; we have two very good private schools, and we have several less ones. Another reason that I would assign for it is the allotment system; men having one-third of an acre of ground find it to be a very great advantage to them. I had a conversation with one of my hands that holds an allotment, and I asked him what advantage he considered that amount of ground was to him; he said, at least 5 *l.* a year. I asked him how he could explain that; he said, he generally made it a point of growing one-third with corn, and the other two-thirds with potatoes; the corn he threshed out, which would feed him a pig; the straw made his manure, and the vegetables that he did not consume he gave to the pig, in addition to the corn; the pig, in the winter time, was worth 5 *l.* or 6 *l.*; and he could go to his chimney corner, and cut a slice of bacon when he liked; and go to his potatoes when he wanted them, so that his comforts were greatly increased, both as regarded himself and his family. Another great advantage has arisen from the suppression of Sunday morning drinking. The market day being Saturday, a great many people used to come home, and, on Sunday morning, they would frequent the public-houses; but now, those public-houses being closed on a Sunday morning, there seems to be no inclination on the part of the men, who do not get drunk in the morning, to go drinking the rest of the day; and I have observed, ever since that Act came into operation, that it has wrought a very great reformation in our place.

4509. Mr. *Ingham.*] What do they pay for the third of an acre?—It varies; it is let out by hundreds; people hold so many hundreds; some of them have about 18 hundreds, and others less; the average is about sixteen hundred, or the third of an acre; the highest I know to be paid is 2*s.* a hundred, and some is let as low as 1*s.* 2*d.*

4510. Is that for 100 square yards?—Yes.

4511. Mr. *Gardner.*] How long has the allotment system been in operation?—It has been in operation in Wigston for 15 years, I should think, but it has much increased within the last seven or eight years.

4512. Who introduced it?—It was first introduced into Wigston by Mr. Burgess, I think, letting out a portion of land on the Leicester road side; I believe that was the first I heard of it, and since that time it has been found to be such a benefit to the hands that there are two of the sick clubs that have laid out their surplus-money in purchasing a piece of ground, and letting it out to members in allotments, which is a great benefit to our place.

4513. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] And do many of the frame-work knitters own their own land, and small allotments?—It is in this way: the clubs have purchased the land, and it is theirs as a body.

4514. The persons who occupy the allotments rent them again from the club?—Yes; I have known, since I have lived in Wigston, 15*s.* rates in one year; for the last five years we have done with four ninepenny, which must show a great change for the better in the condition of the inhabitants of Wigston. We have paid as much as 15*s.* rate in the year, but now, within the last five years, we have not paid more than 3*s.*; that is, four ninepenny rates in the year. There is no doubt that the allotment system has improved the condition of the workmen beyond what people have calculated on.

4515. Mr. *Gardner.*] This statement as to the improved condition of the workmen only applies to Wigston, and not to the hosiery district generally?—It applies to the hosiery district generally where the allotment system is in operation; many of the men, when they have not employment at the frame, will go to their work on their own land; I have found that in many instances.

4516. Lord *J. Manners.*] The more work they can give to their allotment the greater the produce?—No doubt.

4517. At what sort of ages do the children engaged in the hosiery business attend school?—There is a difference; some parents take them away, I must admit, too young, but I have known many of them remain in the Sabbath school till they have been 16 or 18 years old; in the day-schools there is a great difference; some parents will take their children away when they are very young, and others will let them go to school for a considerable time.

4518. At what sort of age would the children be generally taken away from the day-school?—I cannot say.

4519. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is there any strong desire among the labouring classes in your neighbourhood for the education of their children?—There is a very great desire for it.

4520. Mr. *Biggs.*] And is that desire still growing?—It is growing to a great extent.

4521. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do they prefer sending their children to school to employing them at small wages?—I think there is scarcely an instance to be found in the village, unless it is among the very lowest who have no education, in which the parents would not make every effort to send their children to school. We have a national school, in which there are 90 boys and girls, 24 free; in the British School there are 95, and 16 of them are free; individuals in the British School who are found living in the village pay so much each, some sending one and some two; I pay for one that goes there.

4522. At what age are they generally taken from school?—It differs very much; some are taken away perhaps at seven or eight, others go to school till they are 9, 10, 11, or 12, and some I have known to go till they are 13.

4523. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] What is the population?—The population now is nearly 2,500; in 1841, when the census was taken, it was 2,189; in 1851 it was 2,441, showing an increase of 250.

4524. What proportion of the children go to the day-schools?—One hundred and eighty-five.

4525. What proportion do not go above a certain age, say five years of age?—That I have not calculated; there are 185 who go to the two schools; then we have two private schools in Wigston besides these. In one, a lady teaches the children that go there, and turns them out very good scholars, and there are many smaller schools besides, where little children are taken.

4526. Does the same system of sending the children to school, apply to any of the other villages round Leicester, in the same degree as it does to Wigston?—I have made inquiry, and I find not quite so much.

4527. Mr. *Gardner.*] Should you say that the wages received by the heads of families are such as to leave them without excuse for not sending their children to school?—The wages that are earned by some of them are small, I will admit, but I think there are scarcely any who get so little wages as to afford them an excuse for not sending their children to school, and I quite believe that if they would but make application to some of the inhabitants of the village, they would make great efforts to send them, and would pay for them sooner than have them kept at home.

4528. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have given us the average wages earned by five individuals according to a list which you produced, and they run up from 3*s.* 9*d.* the lowest, to 6*s.* 9*d.* the highest; that is working in the domestic manufacture at their own houses and in a narrow frame; surely those persons could have very little to spare to send their children to school?—Yes, but you will see what those cases are; they are boys and girls who earn those wages, they are not the heads of families.

4529. One is 68?—Yes; an old man who was never married.

4530. Another is a married woman?—Yes; her husband works in the same shop as she does.

4531. Mr. *Gardner.*] And she earns 5*s.* 9*d.* a week besides attending to her household duties and three children, does she not?—Yes; 5*s.* 5½*d.*, one 5*s.* 9*d.*, and the other 5*s.* 5½*d.*

4532. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Her children were not able to earn anything?—The first are not.

4533. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is the father?—A labourer.

4534. What does he get?—I suppose 12*s.* a week; he is a labourer of the first class; some labourers get 8*s.*, some 10*s.*, and some 12*s.*; he is a labourer of the first class.

4535. Lord *J. Manners.*] Are they not getting more than that now?—No, except waggoners; the labourers' wages vary from 8*s.* to 12*s.* with us.

4536. Mr. *Gardner.*] What are the average wages of an ordinary agricultural labourer in Leicestershire?—About, I should say, 10*s.* 6*d.* in our village.

4537. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Can you account for the fact of persons earning 8*s.*, or 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week in Leicestershire as stockingers, being sent to other

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employment in the neighbourhood, such as collieries, realising 18*s.*, and not continuing to work with those wages?—I do not know how to account for it; the system which has been pursued for many years has made men very independent, and if you place them under restriction, they soon begin to rebel against it.

4538. And will not stay?—And will not stay.

4539. Sir *H. Halford.*] I observe, from a report in a newspaper, that in the month of April last year there was a meeting held at the Town Arms, Leicester, you acting as chairman, which meeting was held with reference to a Bill which was at that time before Parliament?—Yes.

4540. You remember that?—Yes.

4541. It is stated in that report, that "The chairman (that is, yourself) read to the meeting a statement adopted for presentation to the House of Commons on a former occasion, explaining the difficulty of legislating on the question, and the evils that would accrue from the Bill proposed by Sir Henry Halford becoming law;" were you aware exactly what were the provisions of that Bill?—Only as it had been represented to me, and I had gathered it from the statements of the previous meeting of the workmen, where Buckby and Elliott were speakers.

4542. You never saw a copy of that Bill?—All that I gathered with reference to it was from their statements.

4543. And what was your notion of the purport and object of that Bill?—What I have explained before the Committee to-day; that if the frame-rent system was abolished, and the middlemen had to make their engagements with the manufacturers, and then to strike their bargain with the workmen, the workmen would be in the hands of the middlemen in bad times, and that they would be more exposed than they are at present to be taken advantage of by those who might be disposed to do so.

4544. You considered, did you not, that the object of that Bill was the entire abolition of frame rent?—I so understood.

4545. You were not aware that the object was merely to prevent frame rent from being taken by means of stoppage from wages, so that in point of fact, you were not accurately acquainted with the provisions of the Bill?—I was no further acquainted with its provisions than I have stated.

4546. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do you wish the Committee to understand that since the increase in the number of schools a smaller proportion of children have been employed than were formerly employed in the hosiery manufacture?—Yes, it is much on the decline. I have known as many as 60 apprentices taken in the same village; there has not been one for the last 25 years; there were formerly as many as 500 employed in the stocking-making branch, and now there are not more than 400.

4547. Then the practice of apprenticing children to the stocking-making trade has ceased altogether?—Yes.

4548. Lord *J. Manners.*] But the employment of the children does not seem to have been diminished in the same proportion?—No, and for this reason; many persons engaged in the trade learn their own children.

4549. Mr. *Mundy.*] They teach them themselves you mean?—Yes.

Mr. *Samuel Hackett,* called in; and Examined.

Mr. *S. Hackett.*

4550. Mr. *Gardner.*] WHAT is your trade?—I am what is called a middleman.

4551. Where do you reside?—In Leicester.

4552. How long have you been engaged in that business?—Going for 10 years.

4553. What were you before?—I used to work in a frame.

4554. How many people have you in your employ?—Thirty altogether.

4555. To whom do you work?—Mr. Corah.

4556. Anybody else?—No, not generally; I look to him as my employer.

4557. *Chairman.*] Do you do work for anybody else?—I cannot call it work; if a man wants 10 or 20 dozen made, I make them; that may not occur above once in three months.

4558. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are your hands in the town of Leicester, or in villages?—In Leicester; they all work on my own ground.

4559. Are

4559. Are they collected in a factory?—In two shops, all on my own ground, which I rent.

4560. What is your impression of the present system of rent and charges?—I think it is a legitimate charge for superintending the men in their employment, giving out work, taking it in, fetching yarn, and being accountable for the frame-rents, the winding, standing, and so on.

4561. Lord *J. Manners.*] That answer applies to charges and not to frame-rent?—I include that in it.

4562. Mr. *Gardner.*] What in your opinion would be the result if these charges were abolished by Act of Parliament, and if net wages were given instead?—I think it would be very injurious to a quick hand; he would have to pay more than a slow one, for there would be a reduction, I presume, equal to the amount that is now paid; the quick hand would pay the most, and I think it would be an act of injustice to him. I think it is the fairer way for each one to pay for his own machine; that is my impression.

4563. You have consulted the feelings and opinions of the people who worked to you?—All I have mentioned the subject to, both my own men and others, are in favour of the present system rather than have a change; they think it would be unfair for a quick hand to pay more than he does now, which must be the case under other circumstances.

4564. Do you think the poundage system would work well?—I do not think it would work at all for any good.

4565. Do you think it would give satisfaction to the hands?—I do not think it would; under that system quick hands must pay the most.

4566. Is it a general practice to take full rent and charges for short work?—I do not know that it is; if I give the hands short work I charge them just the time they work, and no more.

4567. How many instances of that kind of exaction have fallen under your own knowledge?—Not any; and if there were any I do not think the hand would submit to it.

4568. Have you heard any statements of that kind credibly made?—None whatever.

4569. You have heard them made?—I have heard them made, but I know nothing about it.

4570. You do not give credit to such statements when they are made?—I do not, because I do not think the men would submit to it.

4571. In times of bad trade the workmen are in a very dependent condition on their employers, are they not?—That is true; but I do not think they would submit to it; however I could not do it, so I have never inquired about it. As soon as there is a bad trade, if my employer says he only wants so-and-so, I stop all the other frames; and if I should have a feeling towards two or three, I might give to two frames one frame's work; but then I only take half rent, and pay for one frame.

4572. Of what kind of frames are you speaking?—Wide frames.

4573. Can you give us a statement of the wages you pay?—About 15 *s.* a week.

4574. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you mean net wages?—Net wages.

4575. And how many hands?—Thirty.

4576. Do they average 15 *s.* a week?—As near as possible.

4577. What is the average of the rent and charges?—Five shillings and threepence; that is, including two kinds of frames.

4578. The average net wages being 15 *s.*?—Yes.

4579. The average gross wages would be a little more than 1 *l.*?—Yes, as near as possible.

4580. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is that the average in the cut-up branch, or in the straight-down department?—It is, from all of whom I have asked.

4581. Have the men in your employ ever, in your presence, or to your knowledge, objected to the present system, or shown any desire to change it?—None whatever.

4582. What do you consider yourself would be the practical effect of a legislative prohibition of the stoppage of rent out of wages?—I think that a legislative enactment of that kind would be very injurious.

4583. Mr. *Biggs.*] How do you think it would operate?—It would have a tendency to throw the slow hands out of employment, and oblige them to

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apply for parochial relief; if they were all good hands, of course they would not have to pay so much as if they were slow hands.

4584. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is, if frame rent were entirely abolished?—If it were not allowed to be stopped out of wages.

4585. You think it would cease to be paid if that were so, do you?—It would; for the men when they received the money would walk off with it, and how could we get it back? If we went to law, the remedy would be worse than the disease.

4586. Would you be worse off than the butchers or bakers who supplied the men with provisions?—I think so.

4587. Why?—Because it is what we have to live on; the butchers and bakers have a profit.

4588. Is there no profit, then, on frame rents?—None whatever. I give such a sum, and charge the same, and therefore I get no profit.

4589. Suppose you had the power of proceeding against a man, as a butcher or a baker has?—I do not think it is well to throw good money after bad.

4590. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is the amount of your charge?—We have winding in our department; that is, 1 *s.* a week for a three-hose frame. Winding is another person's work; it would not do for the men to wind themselves; and as for my own charge, there is 6 *d.* for standing, and 9 *d.* for superintending all the week, going to the warehouse, fetching the stuff, and so on; that is 15 *d.* altogether.

4591. Then you pay the rent of the house?—Yes, and shops.

4592. Mr. Loveday lives five miles from Leicester; he goes from Leicester and back again to bring the yarn; you have not to do that?—I have not that to do.

4593. Are the charges of middlemen in Leicester the same as the charges of middlemen who have that additional duty to perform?—I think we have the additional duty; we have more to fetch in and give out; we have more to do; it takes all my time from Monday morning till Saturday night to attend to the men and go to the warehouse. I have no time to do any thing more.

4594. Do you mean that the duties of middlemen in the town are more laborious than they are in the country?—Yes, we are more on the ground; we have more people to attend to.

4595. But you get paid by each person?—Yes, we do; then another thing is, that Mr. Loveday is not, perhaps, at 30 *l.* a year expense; now I pay 24 *l.* a year rent. I am obliged to do it, and then there are the rates, which at least will average five or six pounds a year.

4596. You mean that a middleman in the town is naturally put to more expense than the middleman in the country?—Yes.

4597. Sir *H. Halford.*] How many frames can you superintend?—It takes my full time to superintend my 30 frames.

4598. How is your time occupied in superintending those 30 frames?—Doing up the work. Every dozen that comes in from the stitchers I look over, to see if it wants mending, and if there is anything to mend I mend it, and then I have to tie it up ready to go into the warehouse.

4498*. You do that in order to secure the proper performance of the work?—Yes, the men are at work while I am doing that.

4599. Does that employ your time every day in the week?—Yes, from Monday morning till Saturday night.

4600. Mr. *Biggs.*] You fetch out the yarn from the warehouse?—Yes; sometimes I have to go to the warehouse three or four times a day, and during that time a man with a frame might earn 1 *s.*

4601. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose it was forbidden by Act of Parliament to stop rents and charges from wages, what course do you think the trade would take?—If there were no means of getting it I should give up, but I should first reduce the work to such a price as would pay me; it would throw more power into the middlemen's hands than they have at present; that is my impression.

4602. You think the result upon the whole would be rather to reduce the wages of the workmen, than otherwise?—Yes, I think so.

Veneris, 8° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir Henry Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Henry Mead*, called in; and Examined.

4604. Sir *H. Halford.*] I BELIEVE you are a resident of Hinckley?—Yes.

4605. You are a Scripture reader there?—Yes.

4606. In connexion with the Church of England?—Yes.

4607. In the discharge of the duties of that office you are necessarily well acquainted, are you not, with the condition of the people?—Yes.

4608. You are in the habit of visiting them frequently at their houses?—Yes, from day to day.

4609. The population of Hinckley consists for the most part of framework-knitters, does it not?—Yes.

4610. What do you find their condition to be generally?—The condition of the framework-knitters of Hinckley at the present moment is very bad indeed; the trade has been in a very depressed state for the last 15 months at least, and is getting worse week by week; there are great numbers of people in Hinckley who are unable to obtain the most common necessaries of life; in fact they are in a state of starvation; as I go from house to house, the first thing that is stated to me generally is, "We have nothing to eat; we are not enabled to gain a livelihood by our labour, and if there could be anything done for us, it would be a good thing."

4611. Are you acquainted with the amount of the poor-rate at Hinckley?—The poor-rate at present is 2 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound, and it is expected that the next rate will be 4 *s.* 2 *d.*

4612. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you mean 2 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound in the course of the year?—Two shillings and sixpence a quarter, as I understand.

4613. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you visit at the poorhouse?—Yes.

4614. What is its condition at present?—The poorhouse is crowded; it is so full that they are frequently turning families out to take others in.

4615. They are obliged to turn people out who are objects of relief to make room for others who are more objects of relief?—Yes.

4616. It is a union house, under the new system, is it not?—Yes.

4617. How many is it calculated to accommodate?—About 400.

4618. Can you give us any information as to the amount of earnings generally capable of being obtained in the branch of manufacture which prevails chiefly at Hinckley?—The kind of hose made at Hinckley, as I suppose the Committee is aware, is the wrought hose. I have a case here of a person of the name of Nathaniel Tilley, who informed me that his net earnings were about 5 *s.* 6 *d.* a week, and he says that his is one of the best cases.

4619. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you inform the Committee what his age is?—His age is about 60, I believe; not more.

4620. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there any other cases as to which you can give us distinct information?—I have a number of cases here: the first that I would refer to, if you wish to take them in detail, is the case of Benjamin Payne; he works to Mr. Aldridge, a middleman, or bagman, as he is called, and his net

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earnings are 2 *s.* 1 *d.* per week; his gross earnings are about 4 *s.* 3 *d.*; he pays 1 *s.* 3 *d.* frame rent; the other charges amount to about 11 *d.*, including candles, needles, &c.; and he receives 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per week from the parish.

4621. He receives 2 *s.* 6 *d.* a week from the parish, in addition to his earnings?—Yes, in addition to his earnings.

4622. Working and living at his own house, he receives parish relief at the same time that he is in work?—Yes; 2 *s.* 6 *d.* a week.

4623. Mr. *Mundy.*] What is his age?—I suppose he is about 60.

4624. *Chairman.*] Is the relief that he receives in the shape of money or bread?—He receives 2 *s.* in money, and a sixpenny loaf, I think.

4625. Sir *H. Halford.*] Paying 1 *s.* 3 *d.* frame rent.

4626. Do you know who the middleman in that case is employed by; is he employed by a manufacturer at Hinckley?—I believe he works to some one at Leicester; I am not quite certain.

4627. What sort of work is it; is it the common wrought-hose work?—Yes.

4628. A common narrow frame?—Yes.

4629. Is there any other case that you are aware of?—There is one of the name of William Gallard; his gross earnings are 4 *s.* 3 *d.*; he pays 1 *s.* frame rent, and his other charges and expenses are about 10 *d.*, leaving his net earnings 2 *s.* 5 *d.*

4630. Does he receive any relief from the parish?—He receives 2 *s.* per week; since I took down this statement the poor man has died, and I believe he died in a great measure from starvation.

4631. Mr. *Biggs.*] How old was he?—I should think he was about 50.

4632. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is there any other case that you know of?—Perhaps you will allow me to state, while it is fresh in my recollection, that there are a number of the stocking-makers who, when they are taken ill, go to the union. I find that when they go into the union the attendance they receive is so good, and the supplies of the necessaries of life are such, that they very soon recover, while, if they are left at their own homes, to receive such supplies as they can get there, they generally die off.

4633. When they go to the union what becomes of their frames?—I suppose they give them up, or, rather, if they are not likely to remain long in the union, it is probable that they will continue their frames till they come out again.

4634. Are they not obliged, before they go into the union, to give up their house and property, or whatever they have?—In some cases; not in all; for instance, there is one case which occurs to my mind, in which a woman, the mother of a family, has gone into the union, and her frame remains in the house; but in many cases, perhaps in the great majority, persons who go into the union must break up their homes, and this operates on their minds in such a way as to make them afraid of going to the union; and many will almost suffer themselves to be starved to death rather than break up their homes and go into the union, because they feel that when they come out they will have very little chance of getting their homes together again.

4635. Is there any other particular case that you wish to refer to?—There is the case of a man of the name of John Hutchins; he is an old man over 60; his gross earnings are 4 *s.* 4 *d.*; he pays 1 *s.* frame rent, and the other expenses are about 10½ *d.*, leaving his net earnings 2 *s.* 5½ *d.* The wife of Mr. Hutchins has been ill, in consequence of which he has been in the weekly receipt of 2 *s.* 6 *d.* a week from the poor-rate; that is in consequence of his wife's illness; she is since dead.

4636. One of the cases that you have mentioned, that of Benjamin Payne, is the case of a man who pays 15 *d.* frame rent, whereas the others pay only 1 *s.*?—Yes; I will give you a case in which one individual pays 9 *d.* and another 6 *d.*

4637. Mr. *Cheetham.*] For the same class of machinery?—Yes; the first case is that of John Whitmore; his gross earnings are 3 *s.* 11¼ *d.*; this is rather more than the statement which the hosier has given; his frame rent is 9 *d.*; and I would observe here that he works to a hosier and not to a middleman.

4638. Sir *H. Halford.*] He works direct to the warehouse?—Yes. I believe he

works to Mr. Woodcock, who is a very kind gentleman, as I shall be able to ow hereafter; he does not, in all cases, take the full rent; in times of sickness, d when he cannot give full work out, the frame rent is 9 *d.*, other expenses *l.*, and the net earnings are 2 *s.* 7¼ *d.* When Mr. Whitmore has paid his use rent, coals, candles, &c., he has only a farthing left to provide himself th food and clothes.

4639. Notwithstanding he is very mercifully treated by his employer?—Yes. e has lately applied for parochial relief, and that relief was refused. I have re a paper from his master, in which he states that his average earnings for out ten weeks are 2 *s.* 11 *d.*, out of which his master states he has to pay for aming and other expenses.

4640. The paper to which you refer is a letter from Mr. Woodcock to the oard of Guardians, is it not?—Yes.

4641. In order to support the man's application for relief, he being at the me time in work?—Yes.

4642. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you give us any information as to the ground on hich his application for relief was refused?—The reason why it was refused, believe, was this, that his wife has a small annuity of about 6 *d.* per day; and think it was out of the power of the guardians to give him relief, his wife eing in possession of that annuity.

4643. Sir *H. Halford.*] The refusal to give him relief, then, was not because e was in work, but because his wife had some private property?—Yes.

4644. Mr. *Biggs.*] How old was he?—Sixty-five.

4645. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of any cases in which the workmen re on what is called stint?—Yes, I will give you a case of that kind.

4646. In those cases, is it the practice to charge full frame rent?—Not ivariably; I have here the case of a man who works to Mr. Woodcock, whose ross earnings are 4 *s.* 1 *d.*; he pays 6 *d.* for frame rent, and his other expenses re 7 *d.*, leaving 3 *s.*; so that in this case his master, that is, Mr. Woodcock, indly gives him one-half of the rent.

4647. Giving him about the same proportion of work, I presume?—Yes.

4648. Giving him half work, and taking half rent?—Yes; but that, I think, not the rule, but the exception to the rule.

4649. The rule being to take full frame rent when the workman is on stint?—Yes, especially with middlemen.

4650. Are there many middlemen in Hinckley?—Not many; about three, I elieve.

4651. Do they work for manufacturers in Hinckley generally, or elsewhere?—I believe they work generally for the manufacturers of Leicester, but I am ot quite clear upon that point.

4652. Are you aware whether or not, when a workman is sick, rent is xacted?—Yes; in the first case to which I referred, the case of Benjamin ayne, he informed me that he did pay full frame rent during the period of ickness.

4653. Are you aware of any other cases in which that has happened?—Yes; have another case here, which is a case of confinement; Mrs. Humphreys nforms me that she was charged, and paid full frame rent during six periods f confinement, the time of which varied from a fortnight to five weeks. I ave another case here, but I do not think it will come within the same ategory; it is that of a Mrs. Meigh; her husband is a turner; she used to work n a frame, but has now given it up; she informed me that during the last two weeks in which she worked in the frame her earnings were 11½ *d.* a week; her husband, who is a turner, had been doing some work for the hosier, or rather the bagman or middleman, as he is termed, and Mr. Smith, her master, paid her the 11½ *d.* for each week's work, but took 1 *s.* from her husband's wages for the frame rent, so that the woman actually worked the two last weeks for the frame rent, and paid for the privilege of being allowed to work.

4654. Without receiving anything for what she did?—She paid 1 *d.*, in fact, for being allowed to work for a fortnight.

4655. In your opinion, is the poverty and distress which at present prevails in Hinckley connected with the unlimited power of making deductions or stoppages from wages?—To a great extent; there is no doubt that at the present period the depression which exists in the trade has a great effect upon

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the poverty of the place; but at the same time, I do consider that the stoppages and exactions which are made from the labour of the workmen has a very depressing effect upon them.

4656. Do you consider that the trade, generally speaking, is a failing trade at Hinckley?—Yes; it is getting worse week by week, without any prospect of an amendment.

4657. And is it not possible that it may be in a manner unnaturally kept up for the sake of the profit that is acquired to the owners of machinery from the frame rent?—There is no doubt of that; it will naturally be to the interest of frame-holders to keep it up by spreading a small amount of work over a large number of frames; that is the temptation which it gives to the holders of frames.

4658. And the effect of that is, is it not, to keep the population in a continual condition of poverty?—There is no doubt of it.

4659. *Chairman.*] Do you say it is the rule in Hinckley to give out short work and take full frame rent?—I believe that to be the rule.

4660. Do you state that from the inquiries you have made in your intercourse with the workmen?—Yes; I have found that to be the rule.

4661. Do you think that giving partial work, and taking partial frame rent, is the exception?—Yes, I think it is the exception.

4662. Do you know at all whether that is caused by the hosiers, or whether it is caused principally by the middlemen?—I am not aware.

4663. Is that exaction practised more by the middlemen, do you think, than it is by the manufacturers?—I have no doubt it is done more by the middlemen; the temptation is great on the part of middlemen, and we generally find, as the cases I have brought forward show, that where there is a small amount of work given out the middlemen exact the frame rent, whereas the hosiers reduce it in some cases to one-half.

4664. You think it is principally done by the middlemen, and not so much by the hosiers?—I believe that to be the case.

4665. *Chairman.*] With regard to taking frame rent in cases in which the operative is sick, is that the rule, or the exception to the rule, do you think?—I believe it to be the rule.

4666. When rent is taken during sickness, or when the operative is unable to work, is it taken chiefly by the manufacturers, or by the middlemen?—I believe the middlemen invariably take it, and if there is any amelioration, it is on the part of the hosiers; there are some of the hosiers who, I believe, invariably take it.

4667. Without reference to the operative being unable, from sickness, to work?—Yes.

4668. But you say it is done more by the middlemen than by the hosiers?—Yes.

4669. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you know any instance of a case of stinted work in which a reduction has been made?—I have referred already, I think, to a case in which, where a person was partially employed, his master, Mr. Woodcock, only took half the rent. The first case to which I referred shows that Mr. Payne, who works to a middleman, earns no more in the gross than is earned in the last case I mentioned, and the middleman takes 15 *d.* frame rent, whereas Mr. Woodcock takes only 6 *d.*

4670. But with regard to the stint of work, does the middleman take the 15 *d.* when he gives out a limited quantity of work?—Yes.

4671. You are quite certain that that is so?—Yes.

4672. *Chairman.*] When trade is slack has the workman any choice but to take any terms that are offered to him?—I believe not.

4673. He has no option in making any contract with his employer?—I think not at all; there are other difficulties in the way of a workman which it is impossible for him to overcome; he is completely set fast; he cannot move in any way; if he wishes to give up his frame he is put to great inconvenience in times of depression of trade; he does not know where to look for another; and not only that, but if he could succeed in getting a frame it might cost him some time which he can ill afford to spare to get that frame into working order.

4674. Sir *H. Halford.*] And during that time is he called on to pay rent?—If he has possession of the frame.

4675. *Chairman.*]

4675. *Chairman.*] During the time the frame is being put in order?—I believe that is the invariable rule.

4676. At that time he is making no sort of profit from the frame by his work?—No.

4677. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the state of education generally in Hinckley; I am speaking of the class of framework-knitters; there are schools, I suppose, at Hinckley?—Yes; I believe there are at the present moment very few of the stocking-makers' children who attend day schools at all; I have been round to the schools, and made inquiry upon that point, and I will endeavour to give the result of my inquiries. The first school I called at was that connected with the Hinckley district church, which is a day school, with about 40 children in attendance, and out of this number only five were the children of stocking-makers; that is about the average of the children of the framework-knitters attending at that school. Then there is a free school kept by a Mr. Oliver, free of charge, except for books; the number on the books is 60 boys and 55 girls; at the date above mentioned there were only 10 of the male children who were the children of stocking-makers present, the rest being the children of tradesmen or labourers.

4678. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does the 10 include the whole of the children, boys and girls?—Ten of the males; I did not inquire into the number of females; out of the 60 males there were 10 children who were the children of stocking-makers.

4679. And in that school no charges were made but for books?—No charges but for books.

4680. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the condition of those children with respect to their appearance, and may it not be a reason why they do not attend these schools, that they are in a very ragged and wretched state?—That is one reason; another is that the stocking-makers are so badly paid, that they require the labour of their children almost as soon as they get out of the cradle: I see children almost as soon as they can walk begin to use the needle or to wind; so that in order to come at this class of people it would be necessary to pay their parents to allow their children to go to school.

4681. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you find that to be the case even with respect to the free school?—Yes; there is no reason, except the reason I have given, why the children of the stocking-makers should not frequent that school as well as another school that there is; there is the school kept by Mr. Parker; the children are not only educated gratis, but they are also supplied with clothes.

4682. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What is the total number of attendants at that school?—The total number in attendance on the day before mentioned, the 16th of April, was about 30 boys, 11 only of that number being the children of stocking-makers.

4683. Sir *H. Halford.*] Notwithstanding the children are provided with clothing from the funds of the charity?—Yes.

4684. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And also their instruction free?—Yes; there is one other day school in the place, which is a Roman-catholic school; the attendance of stocking-makers' children at that school is a little better than it is at the others, and the charge there is a penny per week.

4685. Sir *H. Halford.*] The charge is a penny a week for instruction?—Yes.

4686. Lord *J. Manners.*] And the attendance there is rather better than it is at the free school?—Yes, rather better. I cannot account for that, except that the school is in a locality in which the stocking-makers are very numerous.

4687. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you the particulars of that school?—I have not, for I found it difficult to obtain them from the schoolmaster.

4688. Is it an Irish population?—No; there are very few Irish people in the place.

4689. *Chairman.*] Is there any peculiar encouragement held out or given to children going to the Roman-catholic school?—I am not aware that there is.

4690. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have been acquainted, I believe, generally with the condition of the framework-knitters in various places?—Yes; I have lived among them nearly all my life. I am a native of Nottingham, and was living between five and six years in Leicestershire, during which time I was visiting the people at Sileby, Syson, and other places in that locality where stocking-making is carried on.

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4691. How do you find the condition of those people, as compared with the condition of the people at Hinckley?—I never saw or heard of a place so badly off as Hinckley.

4692. Mr. *Cheetham.*] For what length of time have you known Hinckley?—About 11 months. I went there last July.

4693. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the population of Hinckley?—Six thousand one hundred and eleven, I believe.

4694. Has it increased or decreased of late years?—I believe there has been a decrease in the population of several hundreds since the census 1841.

4695. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have stated to the Committee that Hinckley presents a greater scene of distress as a stocking-making district than any other with which you are acquainted?—Yes.

4696. Can you give us your opinion as to the cause of that distress?—Yes; I think the reason I have to give is a very natural and just reason; in Hinckley, as you are no doubt aware, the branch of trade carried on, or the kind of hose that is made, is the wrought hose, and that is the kind of labour that is worst paid; in the larger places, Leicester, Nottingham, and almost every other place, there are other branches for which the labour is better paid, and consequently the population is better off.

4697. Can you state why it is that those other branches are better paid, and why that branch which is carried on in Hinckley is the worst paid, or have you formed any opinion on that subject?—There are some kinds of hose which are called fancy hose; I think that on Tuesday Mr. Billson stated that that was the branch of labour in which he was employed, and I think he stated that the net earnings of the workmen in that branch were 20 *s.*; so that the earnings or the value of a person's labour in the fancy branch is worth 20 *s.*, whereas in the wrought-hose branch it is not perhaps 5 *s.*

4698. And would not the cause of that 20 *s.* result to the workman in the fancy branch be that the result of his labour was in better demand than the result of the labour of the workman in Hinckley?—I should suppose so.

4699. In point of fact, the trade in Leicester is in a more active state than the trade at Hinckley?—Yes, or some branches of it; I am not certain as to all.

4700. Is it not the case that the present state of distress in Hinckley is owing to the fact of there being a want of demand for the article there manufactured?—In a great measure.

4701. You would not say that that distress is wholly owing to the system of frame rents and charges?—No; but I think that, as in the cases I have shown, where a man is charged 15 *d.* frame rent, and where the other charges which he has to pay amount to 10 *d.* or 11 *d.*, the taking off one-half of his gross earnings for rent and charges must naturally be a cause, and a great cause, of distress.

4702. How would you remove that latter cause of distress?—The best plan that could be adopted, according to my own view, would be to abolish the frame-rent system altogether.

4703. In your opinion, supposing that event to take place, what would be the condition of the workman; do you think his wages would be increased by the amount of frame rent so abolished?—In some cases I think the workmen who are superior hands and able-bodied men would perhaps have a little more to pay, and it would, to a very great extent, ameliorate the cases of the sick, and those persons who are not able to do so much work as an able-bodied man is; take, for instance, the old people.

4704. But would not the effect be, that the old people would be thrown out of employment altogether?—Yes, probably it would in times of depression.

4705. So that their employment in the stocking manufacture would be absolutely done away with?—Yes; but the corresponding effect, I think, would be, that it would allow able and skilful workmen with families to get a living.

4706. But the old, infirm, sick, and very young persons, would be thrown out of employ?—To a great extent they would in times of depression, but not when trade is good.

4707. So that the condition of a portion of the population only would be improved by the abolition of the deductions to which you refer?—Yes.

4708. Sir *H. Halford.*] Would not the effect, in your opinion, be, to bring the trade into a more wholesome and natural condition?—I think it would; I look

I look upon the frame rent and stoppage system as a gangrene in the trade, to which, when the knife is applied by a skilful physician, the effect is to paralyse the patient for the moment, but afterwards it restores life, health, vitality, and vigour to the system, and is the cause of his ultimate recovery. I think that that would be the case, to a very great extent, in the stocking trade, if the present charges and deductions were abolished by law.

4709. You do not consider that it would raise the wages, or increase the earnings of the workmen, but that it would find more steady and abundant employment for the able-bodied men, and would throw out of employment old men and very young children?—Yes; and ultimately I think it might increase the wages of those who are kept in employ, because the old and the young, the sick, and so on, at present only stand in the way of the able-bodied and industrious.

4710. Is it your opinion that the wages depend, or not, upon the state of trade?—Very much.

4711. Upon the abundance or scarcity of employment?—Yes.

4712. Over which the employer has no control?—No.

4713. Then, in fact, the condition of the workmen would remain the same after you had abolished these deductions as before, so far as that condition is connected with the abundance or scarcity of employment?—I should think so.

4714. In other districts in which you have had experience, in Nottingham, for instance, these deductions and stoppages are in existence, are they not?—I cannot say much as to Nottingham; it is 8 or 10 years since I lived there.

4715. Your experience only applies to Sileby, Syson, and Hinckley?—Yes.

4716. And Hinckley is worse than the two other places?—Yes; because the manufacture carried on there has been confined chiefly to the wrought-hose branch.

4717. Are you aware that there are, in the town of Leicester, inventions and improvements going on in machinery, especially in machinery worked by steam power, which are coming in direct competition with the hand labour at Hinckley?—I have heard so.

4718. Have you made no inquiries about it?—The same thing is going on at Hinckley; Mr. Goulby has just established a factory which is likely to abolish a great deal of labour in the wide frames.

4719. That is not a steam factory, is it, but merely condensing the wide machinery for hand labour?—I think it is done by steam.

4720. And you think the effect of that will be to throw out of employment these old and infirm people?—Yes.

4721. Is it not the natural course of things in all trades, that the improvements which are constantly being made in machinery gradually throw out of use imperfect machinery?—I think that must be the case.

4722. Then, in addition to that which you think is operating, in the natural course of things, to prevent the employment of the people in Hinckley, would you add legislation to expedite that change?—I think so.

4723. How would you deal with the parties who would be thrown utterly out of employment by the effect of such legislation?—I think that, with reference to the parties you refer to, who are partially supported now by the union, it would be better to throw them on the union altogether, and to give the able-bodied men a better chance of maintaining their families.

4724. Do you know what the feeling of the workmen themselves would be as to being thrown wholly upon the union?—I think that there are very few workmen who would like the alternative of going to the union.

4725. They would rather prefer partial employment, you think?—I think so.

4726. Limited in its result, as it is limited?—Yes, generally.

4727. Knowing that, from your intercourse with the workmen, would you still submit it to the Committee as your opinion, that it would be better to enforce such a change by legislation than to leave it to take its natural course?—I think so.

4728. Disregarding their own feelings upon that point, you still think their condition would be improved by throwing them out of employment and sending them off to the poorhouse?—That is the old and very young persons, but I think it would improve the condition of the workmen generally.

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4729. You think it would improve the condition of the remaining workmen? —Yes.

4730. Lord *J. Manners.*] And of themselves?—Yes; whereas the present system keeps the whole mass of them down; because there is a small portion of work spread over a large number of frames, by which the hosiers get their frame rents, and that keeps the whole body of the workmen, as it were, in a complete state of starvation.

4731. *Chairman.*] You have been asked whether, if frame rents were abolished, it would not have the effect, though able-bodied men might be employed, of throwing the weak hands and children, and old men, entirely out of employment; supposing an able-bodied man to be employed, he having only one frame, for which he would have to pay rent, would not that be very much more advantageous to his family than if a number of other frames were distributed among his family, he having to pay so much additional rent, and his frames only having partial work?—That is what I think.

4732. Do you not think that an able-bodied man employed fully and entirely with whole work, and having only one frame, would earn more money than if he had in his family a number of frames which were only partially employed? —I do.

4733. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have spoken of the extreme lowness of wages at Hinckley; have you heard any complaint of the lowness of profits on the part of the hosiers?—I am not aware that I have.

4734. Is not frame rent a means of obtaining a larger share of profit on the proceeds of manufacture than fairly should come as profit, at the expense of wages?—I think so; because if the hosier gets a profit on the frame, and a profit on the hosiery, that is, in fact, a double profit; and it is on that account that I should advocate the doing away with the frame rents and stoppages. I would let the hosier do as other tradesmen do, take a profit from the material manufactured.

4735. Is it not natural to suppose, there being that means of obtaining to profit a larger share of the receipts of the manufacturer than is consistent with a just distribution, that the consequence of that is, that that mode of manufacture is kept up in its present languishing condition?—I think so.

4736. Instead of new processes of manufacture being adopted?—I really can hardly answer that question, for I believe that the hosiers, if they have the opportunity, will keep adding steam machinery, where they can produce so much more, and produce the article so much cheaper.

4737. My question is, whether the opportunity of making profits under the old system has not, as its effect, the consequence of keeping up that old system?—Yes, I should think so.

4738. The workmen in the meantime being in a very depressed and languishing condition?—Yes.

4739. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have spoken of a manufacturer or hosier obtaining a profit in his trade by the sale of his articles, and a profit also from his frames; from what source does he obtain these profits?—I should suppose that he would obtain a profit from the sale of the article when it is manufactured in the first instance.

4740. How does he obtain that; does he fix his own price to his customers? —I should suppose so; I am not aware how the fact is; but that is the usual way with tradesmen; they fix a price which will allow them a profit.

4741. And the manufacturer can at all times obtain that price?—I think that must depend upon the demand, in a great measure.

4742. So that the employer has to submit to the principle of supply and demand, to which you allude, as regulating the wages of the workmen, and if the demand is not active it cannot afford the employer profit?—It is almost invariably the case that the manufacturer reduces the wages of his workmen to a corresponding point with the state of the markets, so that instead of the manufacturer losing his profits, the workman loses part of his wages.

4743. What then becomes of the first profit you have spoken of?—I think there is no man, except the poor stocking-maker himself, that will submit to work for nothing, and find himself; therefore I calculate that whenever a hosier sells his goods he sells his goods at a profit; I think that is the rule.

4744. But you tell me that he is under the operation of the same rule as applies

pplies to the workman, and that if there is no demand for his goods, and he as to sell them, he must take such price as is offered to him?—If I told you hat, I did not rightly understand your question.

4745. Do you mean to say that if there is no demand, or but a small demand or goods, and the employer is anxious to sell, he can insist on being paid for hem any price he may choose to ask?—No; but he is not obliged to sell ithout realising a profit on the article he sells.

4746. You think, then, in other words, that he can at all times fix the price t which his goods shall be sold; is not that the deduction from your last nswer?—I do not see it at all follows that he can fix his own price.

4747. You say he is not compelled to sell his goods in the same way as the orkman is compelled to sell his labour?—He must, as I have said, be subject o competition.

4748. If, therefore, he has goods to sell, and there are but few buyers in the arket, he must take such price as the buyers offer him; is not that so?—I suppose he must.

4749. In that respect he is in the same condition as the labourers he employs, s he not?—Yes.

4750. Both parties are subject to competition?—Yes.

4751. Then, at times, as he is obliged to take such price as may be offered, e may be selling without any profit at all?—He may at times.

4752. You say there is a profit upon the frame?—Yes.

4753. Is not the amount of the net earnings of the workman, together with ne value of the material employed, the cost at which the manufacturer makes is goods?—I cannot answer that question.

4754. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not a peculiarity with regard to this system of anufacture, that there is a means of making from frame rent an indirect rofit, superadded to the legitimate profit arising from the sale of goods?—Yes.

4755. Lord *J. Manners.*] Has not the master hosier the opportunity, if he e so minded, of doing what is called holding over; is he absolutely compelled o sell his goods at whatever price people offer for them?—No; he can keep em.

4756. But is the workman in the same condition; can he hold over without elling his goods, that is, his labour?—The workman must sell his labour for hat he can get for it; because, as the saying goes among the workmen, "half loaf is better then none;" if a workman cannot obtain a certain price for his abour, he must work for less or starve; whereas perhaps the hosier can keep is goods in hand, and can wait till the market rises.

4757. Then, in your opinion, the analogy between the master hosier and the orkman, in this respect, is not so complete?—It fails entirely.

4758. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you give that answer from your practical acquaintnce with the condition of the workman?—Yes.

4759. Are you equally acquainted practically with the condition of his mployer?—Perhaps not.

4760. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have stated, in answer to a question put to ou by an Honourable Member, that the rate of wages depends upon the state f trade, and that in a depressed state of trade wages would be depressed; in our opinion are the deductions which are made from those wages also depenent upon the state of trade?—I think, as far as my experience goes, that hatever may be the depression in the trade, the charges maintain their price; me years ago, when trade was much better than it now is, the charges were wer than they are at present; I think you will find it stated in the evidence iven before the Committee that the charge for frame rents used to be 9 *d.*, hen the prices were much higher than they are at present; whereas now we ave a depressed state of trade, and the wages much lower, while frame rents ave actually risen.

4761. Sir *H. Halford.*] So that the amount of charges is in an inverse ratio o the condition of trade?—Yes.

4762. Lord *J. Manners.*] Although as against the workman the rate of ages is depressed in a depressed state of trade, the same result does not llow in his favour by a deduction from the rent and charges?—Not at all, ut rather the contrary.

4763. Therefore the effect of the present system, in your opinion, is to leave

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the workman, as to his wages, to the natural depression arising from a bad state of trade, and to impose upon him unnaturally a further deduction from his wages, although trade is depressed?—Yes, certainly; that is my opinion.

4764. You answered a question as to the fact of the master hosiers, not to your knowledge, complaining of the bad state of trade; do you know whether the middlemen complain when trade is so depressed?—I am not aware; it is very natural when there is a depressed state of trade that both hosiers and middlemen, as well as workmen, should complain, as the profits of each party are reduced.

4765. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have spoken about the rent formerly charged for frames being only 9*d.*; can you tell us what amount of work a workman produced on a frame at that time?—I am not positive as to that; I would have you bear in mind that I am a Scripture reader, and not a stocking-maker.

4766. But you have gone rather fully into the subject in a manner which has rather surprised me, and therefore I have put this question to you; suppose the Committee have had it stated in evidence that the produce was two dozen, the rent, in that case, would be equal to 4½*d.* per dozen?—Yes.

4767. And if he now produces three dozen, the rent being 1*s.*, it would be equal to 4*d.* per dozen?—Yes.

4768. Which is the lower then, the present time, or the time to which you refer?—I think that in the times to which I have referred, when trade was good and when wages were higher, a workman would be able to do more work than he does at present.

4769. But if we have evidence before us that such was not the case, you could not maintain your opinion in the face of that evidence?—But I do not think the evidence would prove that.

4770. Mr. *Mundy.*] You say that a smaller proportion of the children of framework-knitters attend the schools than any other portion of the population?—Yes, by far.

4771. And you say that the effect of putting an end to the stoppage system would be to throw old and very young hands out of employment?—To a great extent it would, in times of depression.

4772. Do you imagine that in consequence of that a larger proportion of these children would attend school than do at present?—I do; I think the wages of the workmen would be thereby increased; I mean the heads of families; and they would be able to dispense with the labour of their children, and to send them to school.

4773. You think that they would be in consequence educated?—Yes.

4774. And their moral condition improved?—Yes.

4775. *Chairman.*] While an able-bodied man was in full work, his children would have time to go to school?—Yes; and I should presume at the same time, that he would have a trifle if it was necessary to enable him to pay their schooling, which he has not at present, even if he could spare them from their labour.

4776. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you any acquaintance with the Sunday school at Hinckley?—Yes.

4777. Do the children of stocking-makers who do not attend the day school, attend the Sunday school?—Yes, there is a much better average attendance there.

4778. So that the disinclination on the part of parents to send their children to school does not arise from an unwillingness to have them instructed, but from the necessity for their labour?—I think so; some of the children are prevented coming to the Sunday school in consequence of their not having clothes to come to school in; but the attendance of the stocking-makers' children at the Sunday school is very good.

4779. Mr. *Mundy.*] Your experience does not extend beyond the county of Leicester, I believe?—Not intimately.

Mr. *Samuel Brown*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *S. Brown.*

4780. *Chairman.*] HOW long have you been connected with the hosiery trade?—In one capacity or other, all my life.

4781. Have

4781. Have you been in different capacities?—Yes.

4782. What capacities?—I have worked in a frame in my youth; I have been what is called a middleman; and I am now the superintendent of a factory.

4783. Then you have had a good deal of experience in those capacities in different branches of the trade?—Yes.

4784. For how long a time were you a middleman?—I was a middleman for about 10 years.

4785. Will you have the goodness to explain to the Committee what are the duties of a middleman?—The duties of a middleman are, to fetch work out from the warehouse; to give it out to the workmen; to see that it is done properly, and to take it back again according to contract.

4786. And how is the middleman paid for that business?—The middleman is paid by the workmen in the shape of charges.

4787. When you were a middleman how did they pay you?—They paid me in that way; I made a charge for frame rents, standing, and so on.

4788. How much were the charges?—You must recollect that it is nine years since I had anything to do with it; the charges then for a frame in the branch of work I was engaged in, which was the glove branch, not stockings, would be altogether 3 *s.* 7 *d.* per week; it would increase according to the width of the frames.

4789. How much a week was the frame rent?—The frame rent was 1 *s.* 6 *d.*

4790. Was there anything else besides the frame rent for the workmen to pay?—Not in that 1 *s.* 6 *d.*

4791. Was there any other deduction besides that 1 *s.* 6 *d.* for frame rent?—There was from the workmen.

4792. What other deduction?—I charged them their standing room, and for my trouble, and winding; the whole was 3 *s.* 7 *d.*

4793. What number of frames did you employ?—Twenty was about my average number.

4794. Whose property were they?—They were the property of the manufacturer.

4795. Had you any frames of your own besides?—I had not any.

4796. Is it not customary for middlemen to have frames of their own?—I believe it is with many of them.

4797. Suppose a middleman had more frames than the manufacturer gave out for work for, what effect would that have upon the workmen; would it injure them?—It would injure them.

4798. In what way?—It would cause the work to be spread over a larger number of hands, and would thereby enable him to get more profit; if he received work for ten men and had five frames more, and he gave the men less work, (which would be the natural consequence,) he would get more profit.

4799. Did you ever hear among the workmen any dissatisfaction expressed with regard to that system?—I have heard very much dissatisfaction of that kind expressed; it is a general complaint among the workmen.

4800. Are your operatives working upon that system now?—No.

4801. What system are you working upon?—We pay net wages.

4802. You are on the net wages system?—Yes.

4803. To whom are you superintendent?—To the firm of W. Preston & Company.

4804. Mr. *Mundy.*] In Leicester?—Yes.

4805. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in that situation?—Nine years.

4806. Were you in the employ of that firm before that time?—Yes.

4807. When you were a middleman?—Yes.

4808. How came you to change from the frame-rent system to the net system?—About that time, nine years ago, there was a good deal of agitation in the town of Leicester, on the subject of paying wages net; frame rent and charges became very obnoxious, and my employers did not like the system.

4809. That is, Preston & Company?—Yes; and for my own part I never was fond of it; so we agreed to make a change, by way of trial, to see how we should like it.

4810. Has that system worked more satisfactorily than the frame-rent system?—I believe it has.

4811. Are you satisfied that it has done so?—I am.

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4812. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you explain how that change was effected, or how you arrived at the scale of wages you adopted in lieu of the deduction for frame rent?—There was a certain deduction made in the gross amount paid for work.

4813. Can you give us the particulars?—I believe 4 *d.* in the shilling was taken from the gross warehouse price; or what the middleman would charge to the hosier previously; supposing a dozen of gloves were 3 *s.* before, between the manufacturer and the middlemen, when there was a re-adjustment of prices, that would be 2 *s.* direct to the workman.

4814. That stood in lieu of rent and other deductions?—Yes, and finishing the work as regards seaming.

4815. Can you tell us in what condition the workman stood by the operation of this change?—I should say they stood better.

4816. His earnings would be rather more?—They would be more from this cause, that there is no inducement to give a man little work for the sake of frame rent; we employ good workmen and get as much work as we can off the machine.

4817. So that his labour has been more continuous?—More continuous, and it is more to his advantage, and to ours as well.

4818. And by means of that the total amount of his earnings is increased?—The total amount of his earnings is increased by that means.

4819. But the frame rent and other deductions are fully allowed for in this 4 *d.* in the shilling?—They are.

4820. So that in respect of that particular matter the workman stands in the same condition as he did before?—Yes.

4821. *Chairman.*] Has the net system worked more satisfactorily both to master and man than the frame-rent system?—I believe it has, from what experience we have had of it.

4822. How are you paid now?—I am paid now by the manufacturer.

4823. And before you were paid by the workman?—I paid myself, and made the best I could of it.

4824. In what way does the manufacturer derive his profit if there are no deductions in the shape of rent and charges?—He gains it by an equivalent in the price paid in the first instance.

4825. In what way can the workman be benefited by this alteration?—He is benefited by having a more continuous supply of work; it is not to the interest of his employer to keep him upon any stint of work, but it is his interest to get as much work as he can from the machine, and that is an inducement to employ first-class hands, as he thereby effects a saving in machinery, economy, in room, and everything of the kind.

4826. Supposing the net system were generally adopted in the trade, do you think the evils that are complained of would be removed?—I believe they would be removed to a great extent.

4827. Do you believe that the Bill of the Honourable Baronet would tend to remove the evils complained of?—I believe it would; the last Bill.

4828. Could the evils complained of be removed, do you imagine, without legislative interference?—I cannot see that they could at all.

4829. Why?—The system perpetuates itself; it is an inducement to any man who is disposed to be unprincipled to gain what he ought not to gain, and to take an unfair advantage of the workmen.

4830. Is there any other matter that you wish to state or suggest to the Committee?—I have nothing particular to state.

4831. Mr. *Mundy.*] How long is it since you adopted the net system?—Nine years.

4832. Have your workmen ever applied to you to return to the rent and charges system?—Never; they would not like to do it.

4833. *Chairman.*] How many workmen have you in your employ now?—From 50 to 60.

4834. Sir *H. Halford.*] Have they not frequently taken opportunities to express their satisfaction with the system upon which your business is now conducted?—They have.

4835. I think they have petitioned Parliament to that effect, have they not?—They have.

Mr. *Thomas Winters*, called in; and Examined.

4836. HOW long have you worked at the stocking trade?—Over 20 years.

4837. Have you had frequent opportunities of ascertaining the opinions and feelings of the framework-knitters generally with regard to their grievances?—Yes, on many occasions.

4838. Will you describe the modes of deductions from wages, and the reasons assigned for such stoppages?—The first comes under the head of frame rent, and that is varied according to the localities, and also according to the description of work that is made upon the machines. I think the general rent of a wrought-hose frame would be 1*s.*; that would be taking a 16-inch frame; the same width of frame in the glove trade would be 1*s.* 6*d.*; in the cap trade and sock trade it also varies for the same width, and the same description of machine; and the general complaint is, and I know it was in my own case, that that was taken whether you were ill or well, at half work or in full work.

4839. Have you generally found it to be the rule in the trade, that when there has been only half work, there has been exacted the full frame rent, and that when the operative has been disabled by sickness, he has had to pay full rent for his frame?—Yes, that has been the general complaint, both in the counties of Nottingham and Leicester.

4840. Is there any direct relation subsisting between the workman and the manufacturer?—Not the slightest legal relationship between the two; and from that a great difficulty arises, as to getting at the exact state of the case from manufacturers. I think the manufacturers are the least capable of practically knowing the difficulties that the workmen labour under, of any class that I know, because they have no connexion, legally or otherwise, with the workmen, the dispute resting between the veritable employer, or what is termed middleman or bagman, and the workman himself. For instance, if I wanted to recover my wages from a manufacturer, in any case of dispute, I could not lodge any complaint against him, because he would turn round at once, and say, "Show me that you are my servant, or that I am your master;" I could not do so, because I have no connexion with him, direct or indirect.

4841. Do the workmen understand, when they take in their work, what stoppages will be made from their wages?—Sometimes, so far as the rent and the other stoppages are concerned; but then they are not aware that there is another stoppage that is often made, and that is exacted under the plea of defective work.

4842. Then, in fact, they are not sure, when they take in their work, what net wages they will receive?—No; it would depend on any plea being set up by the employer, as to whether the work be defective or not; and supposing that plea to be set up, there is no legal evidence that the workman could produce as to the contract between the two.

4843. Are stoppages governed by any fixed rule, or do they vary according to the will of the master?—They vary according to the will of the master. For instance, I have myself paid 3*s.* 6*d.* for a loom in one shop, and in another shop 4*s.* for the very same description of machine, making the same kind of goods.

4844. But under the same master or different masters?—Under different masters.

4845. Therefore there is no rule among the masters for the same description of machine as to what the charge should be to the workman?—There is no fixed rule.

4846. Do you consider that that system is generally oppressive to the workmen and injurious to the inhabitants generally of the district in which it is practised?—I do.

4847. Does it not tend to create and maintain a large surplus population in the hosiery districts which has to be supported by taxation?—From inquiries that I have made on different occasions, that has been the result; whenever there has been anything like what is termed a slackness of trade, the result has been an influx of paupers, and even in good times the poor-rates, I believe, in Leicester, are very high indeed; I know that when I was living there I had to pay something like 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound per quarter.

4848. Does not the system of making a profit by frame rent encourage the owners

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owners of frames to maintain many unskilled workpeople and to perpetuate them in the country?—Yes; I might state that at least a third of the knitters generally are women and children.

4849. Do you not consider that to be an injury to the general welfare of the framework-knitters, both in a social and intellectual point of view?—Yes.

4850. Instead of promoting industrious habits, does it not encourage a life of indolence, whereby the population generally is demoralised?—Yes, for this reason: the work is generally given out, in good times, in Leicester, on the Monday; in slack times, or in ordinary times, it often ranges over Tuesday, and I have known it in many cases given out on the Wednesday, the rule being also on the Saturday to leave off in the middle of the day; the consequence is, that when they get work they keep what has been termed by some persons Saint Monday, that not being their own choice, as it has been stated to be, but they do it from necessity.

4851. Has not the keeping of Saint Monday, and making holidays on other days in the week, proceeded more from the workmen not having any work to do than from the idleness of the operatives?—Yes; and those Saint Mondays have been kept up afterwards in consequence of the habits that have been contracted during slack times, when work has not been given out.

4852. With regard to their education, is their religious instruction generally neglected?—Instruction of all kinds; even the common rudiments of education are neglected, in consequence of the children, when the operatives have work at all, having to be put to work when they are something like five or six years of age.

4853. Do you know any instances of children who have been drugged by their mothers, in order to keep them quiet while they are working at the loom?—It is a general practice, giving them what is called Godfrey's Cordial; it is a general thing in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire (I am not so much acquainted with Derbyshire) to give them that drug, to make the children sleep while their mothers are employed at the loom.

4854. Does not this system prevent the trade progressing in the same ratio as other branches of industry which are free from the evils complained of?—It does. I think the exports of hosiery show that, for in 1815, in the woollen trade, we exported 205,771 dozen; I then go up to 1825, and there is a declension; it is 106,498 dozen; in 1835 it amounted to 207,014 dozen; in 1846 there were 161,798 dozen; and the returns of the present year, 1855, are 331,687 dozen, which shows a very large increase. I think that is to be accounted for by the large number of cheap stockings that have been made during the last three or four years over the other years. I think that if we could get at a veritable return of the number of wrought stockings we should find that there has been scarcely any improvement at all in that particular branch of the business.

4855. Mr. *Cheetham.*] To what cause do you ascribe that declining state of things; do you ascribe it to these stoppages?—I think it is attributable to that in a great measure, because the inducement is to get a profit upon the frames rather than upon the goods; it is well known in the counties of Leicester and Nottingham that profits are made more upon the frames than they are upon the goods. I do not care about manufacturers, because they are out of the question; but as between the workmen and this system, I think the inducement is to employ as many persons as possible, and the younger they are the more inexpert they are, and the older they are the better it is for those employing them.

4856. The total result of their increased labour ought to be a larger production, ought it not?—That is supposing they kept improving, but that is not the case; whenever there is a flatness in the trade, the first persons who are thrown out of employment are those who can do the most work, the able-bodied men with small families, and young men; they are the persons who could do the most work, and they are the first to be turned off.

4857. You ascribe the decline since 1815 to the operation of the stoppage system, do you not?—No; I do not say there is any decline in the trade; I say it has not progressed; and had it not been for frame rent and charges, I think it would have progressed as much as the trade in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and other great commercial districts.

4858. Is the whole of the production to which you have alluded in the paper to

to which you have referred consumed in this country?—I have been speaking of what is sent abroad, not of the home trade.

4859. You mean to say that the amount sent abroad has been influenced by the stoppage system?—Yes, and the amount consumed at home too.

4860. Do you know whether you had in 1814 or 1815 any foreign competitors?—The foreign competition at that time was not so great as it is at present; but I think that if you were to go back as far as 1835, you would find that there was then a large number of frames in Saxony.

4861. Can you speak of the state of the trade in Saxony now?—No more than what report says; I have no personal knowledge of Saxony.

4862. If foreign manufacture has been extending, and of course coming into competition with goods produced here, would not that have an effect upon the amount exported from this country; you say the goods you produce are exported from this country?—Yes, woollen goods.

4863. My question is, if since 1815 there has been a considerable progress in the foreign manufacture of hosiery, which is also shipped abroad to similar markets to those to which our own is shipped, that would not have an influence on our exports?—It would, supposing they were better goods than ours, and made at a cheaper rate.

4864. Is it not the fact that the hosiery trade in England has experienced very great competition from the German manufactures?—I cannot answer that question directly; but an Honourable Member of this Committee stated some time ago, as well I think as some other manufacturer engaged in the American trade, that the principal cause of the decline, or rather of the non-progress of our particular trade in America, was the bad material with which the articles were made, and the very indifferent state in which they were sent out; that is, that they were made to resemble one thing while they were in fact another. It was ascribed to that.

4865. And therefore those goods did not obtain a sale?—No.

4866. Where did the American consumers get supplied?—A great number of them got supplied at that time from Saxony.

4867. Would not the existence of a Saxon manufacture now, and its non-existence in 1815, have a considerable influence, do you think, upon the state of our export trade?—I draw my conclusions from this fact, that since we have been sending out goods of another description, the trade has progressed; I draw the other conclusion that the progression of machinery has been stopped, in consequence of the system of frame rents and charges in this country.

4868. Then, since the introduction of another system of machinery, our exports have increased; to what class of machinery do you allude?—The wide machinery.

4869. Does not that make stockings at a less cost than the narrow machine?—Yes.

4870. Would not that have an influence, do you think?—Yes.

4871. What has that to do with these stoppages?—I say the system of stoppages has prevented the growth of our exports.

4872. In what way?—Because it was the interest of the manufacturers, and of the middlemen more particularly, to make goods when they were not wanted, they deriving their profits from the machine instead of from the goods manufactured.

4873. It was their interest, you say, to make goods when they were not wanted, thereby increasing the production?—Yes; increasing it to a limited extent.

4874. And to force it into the market for sale?—That would be the natural result.

4875. And the inevitable result would be, would it not, to reduce the selling price?—It would be so, supposing there were no other customers; but population is increasing everywhere every day, and we ought to produce a great many more goods to serve the same market.

4876. You say the effect of this stoppage system is to increase the quantity of goods?—Yes, when they are not wanted.

4877. Then, of course, the tendency of that would be to lower the sale price of the goods?—Yes; if there were no more purchasers it would be so.

4878. As you lower the price the consumption ought to increase?—It ought to increase anyhow, whether the price is lowered or not.

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4879. It shows that you have not been able to increase your consumption abroad?—Yes.

4880. In what way has that to do with the question of stoppages?—Had it not been for the system of stoppages a superior class of machinery would have been brought into existence; a different class of goods would have been manufactured; and the same improvements which have been made in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire, and in other manufacturing counties, would have been found in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire; but its growth has been stopped in consequence of the peculiar system.

4881. Has the evil effect of that system been felt most by the workman or by the master?—The evil has been felt most by the workman.

4882. In what way has the system produced an evil effect; has it reduced the amount of the workman's earnings?— Yes.

4883. Can you state to us what has been the monetary effect of the system upon his earnings?—Suppose I earn a dozen shillings in a week, or 2 *s.* a day, if I am deprived, through the system of spreading work, of working two days in the week, I am deprived of 4 *s.*; and if at the same time I am paying 4 *s.* a week for my frame I ought to have some deduction made from that, but that is not the case, and there is an evil there. There does not seem to be any mutuality in the contract between the two parties. It has been stated here, I know, that it is a bargain or contract; that is fallacious; there is no such thing.

4884. I want to measure the extent in a monetary point of view of this evil upon the workmen; does it amount to 2 *s.* or 4 *s.* a week, or what is it?—It would depend upon the skill of the particular workman; I think their average wages when they are in full employment is something like 5 *s.* or 5 *s.* 6 *d.* a week; suppose it to be 6 *s.*, for the sake of argument, if you take two days' work off, that, of course, will reduce it to 4 *s.*, and that would apply to 30,000 persons.

4885. The effect of it is to reduce the price paid for labour 2 *s.* for each individual?—Yes.

4886. And the cost of the hose manufactured would thereby be reduced to the extent of that 2 *s.*?—No, the cost would be just the same; the weight of the material would be just the same, and the workmen would receive the same price for making.

4887. You told me that the weekly earnings of the workmen would be reduced 2 *s.* a week?—Yes.

4888. Then the cost of making the hose is reduced by that amount?—No, that is not the case; it is not upon the cost of the goods that the reduction takes place, it is upon the man's weekly wages; he does not purchase the materials, and then make them up and take them into the warehouse as he would to a factor.

4889. Who gets the benefit of the reduction of 2 *s.* of which you speak?—Nobody; it is a loss to the workman; it is a loss which the master gains out of the rent of the frame and the charges he makes upon the workman.

4890. If 4 *s.* per dozen be the gross cost paid to a workman, and the stoppage for rent is 1 *s.*, he would receive, if he made three dozen, 3 *s.* 8 *d.* net; but I understand you to say that he loses another 4 *d.* a dozen, or 1 *s.* a week more, by this system?—He loses employment for those days on which he is not allowed to work in the frame, for which frame he is made to pay rent and charges.

4891. Am I to understand you as saying that a manufacturer is desirous of only partially employing his frames?—It is his interest to do so.

4892. In all states of trade?—When there is not a sufficient market it is his interest to employ as many frames as he can, for the purpose of getting as much rent as he can.

4893. To what portion of the year does that apply?—Sometimes for three months, sometimes six; it has extended a year, and from that to a year and a half and two years.

4894. The cause of that want of employment has been a want of demand, has it not?—Yes; but there are other circumstances connected with that.

4895. Is the cause of the non-employment of frames the want of demand for the

the produce of them?—That may be the original cause; it is one cause; but there are other causes connected with it.

4896. Is not, at all times, the employment or non-employment of machinery the result of an active or of a depressed state of trade?—It should be so.

4897. The object of a manufacturer is at all times to keep his machinery employed when he can sell the produce of it, is it not?—Yes; but it is his interest in this case to employ it when it is not wanted.

4898. When he cannot sell his produce, and cannot keep his frames fully employed, he spreads the work over a greater number of frames than he ought?—Yes; I am speaking of the employers, not of the manufacturers.

4899. What remedy would you propose, in order to do away with this state of things?—My remedy would be an Act of Parliament to do away with any stoppages being made, under any pretence, from a workman's wages.

4900. Will you give me, if you please, your view, as regards the earnings of a workman, should such an Act as you contemplate be passed; how would he stand as to his earnings per week?—Taking a 6 *s.* stocking, or a 4 *s.* stocking, if a man earns 6 *s.* now, and out of that would have to pay something like 2 *s.*, I think a corresponding reduction might be made in the price of the goods, to cover that expense, without any injury to the workman.

4901. So that, in point of fact, his earnings per week would remain the same after the passing of such an Act as they were before?—That would be the case, supposing he were only employed the same number of days; but I am of opinion that circumstances would alter.

4902. Would the effect of passing such an Act of Parliament as you contemplate be, in your judgment, to raise or to reduce the earnings of the workmen?—I believe it would raise them eventually.

4903. How do you expect it would raise them?—Because it would be the interest of manufacturers in the hosiery trade, as it is in other branches of industry, to give full employment to the men, or none at all, rather than act upon the present half-work system, which is practised, for the sake of getting full rents.

4904. Do you mean that the manufacturer would give full employment to all his workmen?—Not if he had not work for them; it would be unreasonable to expect it in such a case as that.

4905. You expect that it would give full employment to a portion of the workmen?—Yes.

4906. What do you think would become of the remainder?—I will take, for instance, a family. I hold in my hand a list of the earnings of 500 workpeople, out of 560 or 570, or thereabouts. Here is James Gibson and Maria Gibson; that is father and daughter; the father is employed half the week, and the daughter is employed half the week, but full frame rents are taken for both. If the father was employed alone he would be employed the whole of the week, and there would be the same amount of money coming into the house with the one as there would be with the two, and it would also give increased facility to the daughter to get work, either in some factory or in stitching stockings, which are now sent out of the county to be stitched, and that would increase the wages earned by the family to the amount earned by the daughter.

4907. Is not your answer tantamount to this, that the sum going into the family would be the same after the passing of the Act as before, but it would be divided among a fewer number of persons?—Yes; and it would give increased facilities to the other party to get work elsewhere, and so to bring more money into the family. If the daughter is thrown out of the stocking trade the father gets the same money as they both got before, and the daughter has the opportunity of getting some other employment.

4908. So that a man is kept in employ, and his earnings are increased by his employment being continuous?—Yes.

4909. *Chairman.*] And he would only have to pay rent for one frame instead of two?—Yes.

4910. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What would become of the rest of the family who are now partially employed?—The impression is, that they would be driven to the poor's rate; but there being one-third women and children, the same argument applies to them as to Maria Gibson, because they are not heads of families.

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families. If this one-third were heads of families, we might, I think, draw the inference, that they would be placed upon the parochial rates; but the work going from the child, or the wife, to the father, there would be the same amount of money coming into the house, and more, because there would be at least 2 *s.* or 3 *s.* less frame-rent and charges.

4911. What would become of the old men, and women, and others, who are now employed; they, of course, must be thrown out of employment?—I have taken that into consideration, and I say it would amount to the same thing; they would save the frame rent, and other charges, which are paid for frames scarcely employed at all. There would be no more necessity for them to go upon the parochial rates than there is now, and not so much, because if three parties earn 12 *s.*, and you take 6 *s.* from them, you leave only 6 *s.*; whereas if the 12 *s.* are earned by one person, and you take from him 2 *s.*, there is a saving of 4 *s.* to the family.

4912. You say that the total amount going to the family would be the same as it is now, only it would be divided among fewer parties?—Yes; but they save the rent; it would benefit the family to the extent of 4 *s.*

4913. Sir *H. Halford.*] There would be fewer frames employed?—Yes.

4914. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You think that the result of this legislation would be to raise the earnings of the workmen 4 *s.* a week?—It would, in cases where there are three of a family employed with short work, and that would be without any injury to the consumer.

4915. Sir *H. Halford.*] The same work would be done, but it would be done on fewer frames?—Yes.

4916. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And the fewer number so employed would earn 4 *s.* a week more than they do now?—According to this average; they only work four days instead of six, but that would bring them six days' employment instead of four; in bad times that would be the result.

4917. And how would you dispose of those who were not employed?—They would be placed in a much superior position to what they are in now, because they are all labouring together now for a certain sum; that certain sum would then come into the hands of one person, and supposing that to be the case, there would be a benefit of 4 *s.* in the shape of rent and charges, which would go some way towards supporting the family; but in addition to that, it would give those other parties an opportunity of getting employment elsewhere, and so of increasing the comforts of the family from that source also.

4918. You say the total amount of money going to the family would remain the same, but that instead of its being obtained by half-a-dozen persons, it would in future be obtained by two or three only?—Where there are three now doing one man's work, if two were discharged, one man would do it.

4919. So that the total amount of money coming in would remain the same?—About the same.

4920. Sir *H. Halford.*] But the deductions would be less, would they not?—The result would be that the family would benefit to the amount of 4 *s.* which is now taken in the shape of rent, but which would not be taken if the frames were not employed.

4921. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I am speaking of the net results; suppose a man were working on the net system, would not his payment per dozen be after an allowance was made for all these charges?—Yes.

4922. Then in what way, except by the continuous employment of his frame, could his earnings be altered?—By the saving of his rent he and his family would be benefited accordingly.

4923. But the other parties would have no employment?—That is supposing a case contrary to the fact: the fact is, that one-third are women and children; it was stated in evidence the other day in this room, by Mr. Corah, to bear my statement out, that a Mr. Turner, of Sharnford, had 100 frames, out of which there were 68 which were worked by women and children, that is something more than half; and the same thing applies to Mr. Laurance of Stoke Golding; he says he employs 106, and out of that there are 40 men and 66 women and children; so that there are above half there; those are families; and I think that we have a right to draw the conclusion from that fact, that if the work is taken away from the children, it will go to the father, for you cannot make framework-knitters spring up like mushrooms.

4924. It would depend, would it not, upon the net scale of wages that might be

be agreed to be paid to the workmen?—I think there would be no difficulty about a scale.

4925. Where a man produces three dozen a week at 4 *s.*, it is equivalent to paying him 3 *s.* 8 *d.* a dozen net, without any deduction; where a man does only one dozen per week, that is paying him 3 *s.* net?—Yes; but you could not come to a regulation of that sort, making a different list of prices for the man who makes one dozen only.

4926. What list would be agreed upon to equalise these conflicting charges of 3 *s.* and 3 *s.* 8 *d.*?—I would take the same course as was taken with the glove trade; I think it was about 1844, that the question was under discussion in the town of Leicester, more particularly as to abolishing these rents and charges at that time, as has been stated by Mr. Brown; 4 *d.* in the shilling was taken off all descriptions, I believe, of goods in the glove trade; that was divided between the persons who made the hands, the persons who made the fingers, and those who stitched them up; I think it amounted to 2 ½ *d.* difference to the workman; there were some in that branch who would make more than others, and an average was struck, and it was agreed to take this 4 *d.* in the shilling. I do not see but what the same principle might be applied to the wrought-hose trade, the straight-down trade, the fancy trade, and every other branch that may spring up. The only difficulty that seems to be in the way as is exhibited by the manufacturers is this: we do not care about adopting the net system to those men who are most skilled, and able, and strong, and who do a great deal of work; our objection applies to the old men and young children, who cannot do so much; now that is the particular part where the grievance lies; it lies more with those that cannot do it, and are not able to do it, than with those who can do a great deal.

4927. You have stated that one-third of them would be thrown out of employment?—It applies to all.

4928. The difficulty you raise is with regard to the inefficient workman; the one dozen man?—It is not my difficulty; it is the manufacturer's difficulty.

4929. The tendency would be to throw that man out of employment altogether, would it not?—It might do so in many cases; it would depend upon the description of work he might be making; there are so many different sorts of work that you cannot speak generally, but you must go to particulars.

4930. But you agree with other witnesses, do you not, who have stated to the Committee that there would be a tendency, by the adoption of that system, to throw out of employment the inefficient hands?—That is on the supposition that trade remained stationary.

4931. Has not the same influence been produced by the introduction of improved machinery?—Certainly the cheap goods made upon wide frames have got the start in the market, and a great many of the others have been lying idle, but it was the same in 1819, 1820, 1825, and 1830; the same thing was in existence then as now, as respects persons being idle.

4932. But that has not increased by the introduction of wide frames, has it?—Some persons think so, but I am not certain that it is the absolute result.

4933. I believe there is a still further invention by means of which, by the application of steam, the cost of producing a dozen of hose may be reduced from upwards of 3 *s.* to 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a dozen, and that will have a similar effect, will it not?—I am not certain about that, because there is great difficulty about steam being applied to all descriptions of hosiery; as far as I understand at the present moment, it is only applied to one description of frame making, a particular description of goods, and that of the coarsest material.

4934. Is it not applied to the wrought-hose branch?—There is nothing new in the principle at all; the same principle has been in existence for many years; it is the rotary principle, with steam powers applied to it.

4935. The application of steam to it is altogether new, is it not?—Yes; but it is also admitted that they can make only one description of goods; you cannot alter them to make any other description of goods; and when I tell you that there are some two or three thousand different descriptions of work in the various branches, and of various gauges, and when you take into account the various sizes and qualities of material, it will be found that there is a great deal of difficulty in applying the principle generally. I think there would be found to be great difficulty in applying it to the glove trade and sock trade, and the

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fine descriptions of goods; it is with respect to the coarser qualities that it may interfere, and that is comparatively a new trade.

4936. There may be differences of opinion as to the extent to which it may throw out of employment old frames, but to a certain extent it has a tendency, has it not, to do so?—That is, supposing trade does not progress, but I hope it will progress, and that instead of a quantity being idle, these young hands will be placed in employment, only in a different mode.

4937. Of course it can only progress by economising the cost at which the article is made?—Just so.

4938. And so far as this machinery has that tendency, to that extent it will extend your business?—It will tend to throw Saxony more out of the market, I think, but I do not think it will interfere much with the wrought-hose trade generally, either in the cotton trade or in the silk trade, or in the fine description of woollen goods.

4939. So that as regards the general manufacture in the wrought-hose trade, you think that will remain much about the same?—I think that with regard to the better descriptions of wrought hose it will remain the same.

4940. And to put it on a sound footing you would advocate this legislation?—I advocate this legislation simply because I do not believe there is any other mode of obtaining justice for the workmen.

4941. You have told us that in a particular branch of the trade, that which you wish to see carried out by means of legislation, was effected by private arrangement some years ago?—In one or two shops, but the principle is not generally applied; I do not know of my own knowledge of any persons by whom it is carried out, except Messrs. Preston and Brown.

4942. But if it be found advantageous to both master and man, how is it that it cannot be carried out by private arrangement?—There may be a great difference of opinion about that. I will take Messrs. Brown & Preston; at the time I was in the trade I know they were always looked up to as the very best employers there were in the trade; they were willing to try any system that would not injure themselves, and which would benefit the workmen, and I have every reason to believe that the workmen have been benefited by that system, and that Messrs. Brown and Preston have not been injured; but if you take another person who probably may have 50 or 60 looms, making as many descriptions of work, and those looms are spread about in one place or another, it is a different thing with him; he would first of all have to build a factory, and would have to bring those looms together, and place them under the superintendence of some one; his means may not allow of that, or it may, as it does, I believe, suit his convenience to have as many frames as he can, and for them to do as little work as they can.

4943. You think that, without introducing the frames into a factory, he could not carry out the net system?—I do not say that; I believe he could.

4944. Have the workmen made any attempt, by communication with their masters, to get the system adopted?—They have made many attempts, and not only the workmen, but the tradespeople generally have, as well as the clergy and the gentry of the county and town, and the boards of guardians; in fact, almost all sorts of people have made attempts to benefit their condition, and alter the system.

4945. But I asked you whether any attempt had been made to obtain the assent of the manufacturers to the introduction of the net system?—Yes; in 1847 there were several meetings held, and the manufacturers generally were solicited to adopt the system. I hold in my hand a requisition that was signed by 24 Poor-law guardians, and seven members of the select vestry, eight overseers, and some other authorities, and 16 workmen, calling upon the mayor of the town, who was himself a manufacturer: "To take into their consideration the increasing pressure of the rates for the relief of the poor, and how far the present system of rents, charges, &c., connected with the staple manufactures of this town and neighbourhood has an influence upon the condition of the poor, and the increase of parochial expenses."

4946. That does not allude to the net system?—The net system arises out of it; the opinion of the meeting which was called by the mayor was, that the present rents and charges had a very material influence upon the increase of rates; the resolutions attached to this paper were moved by members of the Board of Guardians, and others, and their opinion was, that the net system would be an improvement,

improvement, not only to the workmen, but a great advantage to the town in general.

4947. Was any practical result sought?—The opinion of that meeting was conveyed to the manufacturers, but the result has been nil.

4948. The net system was in operation in some cases, was it not?—In Mr. Brown's establishment; I do not know of any other place in which it has been established.

4949. You are not aware that it is practised in eight or nine houses in Leicester?—I am not aware of that, and I do not think it is the fact.

4950. We have had evidence to that effect?—I think there is a mistake about that; there is a wide difference between the net system and taking a per-centage. I think the other parties that are alluded to are the Messrs. Biggs and others; Messrs. Biggs goes upon the poundage system and not upon the net system, and that, in my opinion, is as great an evil as the rent system itself, if not worse; because in that case, supposing Messrs. Biggs could not find me a loom, as a matter of course I should have to rent one, and Messrs. Biggs would take the 1*s.* 8*d.* from my wages as though I worked in their own frame; in that case I should be charged double; I should have to pay Messrs. Biggs for being employed, and I should have to pay for my frame in addition.

4951. That poundage system being a system in which no scale is made for a man having his own frame?—It lacks that; I think that before any system could be founded upon the per-centage system, you must make them all manufacturers' frames, or all independent frames.

4952. Why not establish a differential scale where the machine is found by the workman?—That might do in the connexion between the middleman and the workman to a certain extent, but if there were no limits it might turn out that where one would take 1*s.* 6*d.* another would take 3*s.*

4953. And can you by any legislation prevent that?—Only by a simple declaration that all wages shall be paid in the current coin of the realm; that is the simple remedy, I think.

4954. When that is done, how are you to arrive at the amount you are to pay to the workman; suppose you pay him 4*s.* now gross, from which there are deductions in the shape of rent and other charges, how are you to arrive, by the net system, at the amount to be paid, instead of this 4*s.*?—They must average it; they could not take one man singly; for though you may have one man making a dozen to-day, you might have another coming to-morrow; and when you asked him how many dozens he could make, he would not be able to tell you; therefore he would have to go a week upon credit. The remedy would be to take an average price, and see what was a fair equivalent for the work done; the wages would then find their own level.

4955. And to arrive at a net scale, you would necessarily deduct the rent and charges as now existing?—Exactly so; we should take the average.

4956. In point of fact, you would be paying rent and other charges the same as you do now, only in another shape?—Yes; with this difference: when I did no work I should not pay rent; and your question supposes me to be always employed, which is not the fact.

4957. He is employed when trade is active enough to call for his employment?—Just so.

4958. In a bad state of trade, is not the workman more or less in the power of his employer as to the amount of his wages?—He is entirely at the mercy of his employer.

4959. And is not the employer himself, under those circumstances, when there is not an active demand for his production, more or less in the power of the buyers?—We have been taking it for granted all along that a workman has power over his frame, the same as a man would have renting a house. Now, there is a wide difference between the two cases; a man renting a house has the full occupation of the house for the whole week; but a man renting a frame has only the occupation of the frame for such time as the master permits him; if he would permit the man to work in that frame for anybody else, it would be a parallel case; but he says, "No; you shall not work for anybody else; but I will have the rent and the charges."

4960. Does not the employer give partial work out, because the state of trade will not enable him to give out full work?—That is true; but there is no

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legal relationship between the manufacturer and the workman; the manufacturer has no more to do with the workman than I have to do with the manufacturer; the middleman is the employer, and therefore the manufacturer is out of court as to that.

4961. Would you, in legislating upon this matter, abolish middlemen?—No, I do not want to abolish them; what I want to see is, that a man when he goes to work, and when he has ended his work, shall not have an indefinite portion of the money he has earned deducted from his wages.

4962. In other words, you want him to know that, instead of nominally having 4 *s.* and receiving, in fact, only 3 *s.* 6 *d.*; he has 3 *s.* 6 *d.* net to receive?—Exactly; and not as it was in a case, the account of which I hold in my hand, which came before the bench of magistrates in the borough of Leicester; it is thus: "At the Town-hall, Leicester, a man, named William Tilley, came before the magistrates to make the following statement. He said he had been working a six-hose frame, the property of Messrs. Poole & Lewin. Last week, his gross earnings amounted to 9*s.* 2 *d.*, out of which 9 *s.* 1 ½ *d.* was deducted for charges, leaving him a halfpenny for his whole week's work." I want to prevent a case of that sort.

4963. Mr. *Wickham.*] Would not the doing away with middlemen prevent such cases occurring?—I do not see how you can do away with middlemen.

4964. Could not I employ a workman without the intervention of any one else?—That would do away with the middleman at once, and then you would turn him into an overlooker; but I understood the Honourable Member to ask, whether you could pass a law to do away with the middlemen. I do not think you could.

4965. *Chairman.*] I gather, from what you say, that, under the stoppage system, it is the interest of the employers to deal out the least quantity of work, and to keep the largest amount of machinery at work?—Just so.

4966. And that, if the system of stoppages were abolished, the reverse would be the case; it would be the study of the employers to produce the greatest quantity of work by the least possible amount of machinery?—Yes.

4967. Do you not imagine that the last is the most healthy mode of conducting the trade?—Yes. I have a paper here (*producing it*) which shows that, in 1844, the total number of frames employed in Leicester was 3,620, the charges being 21,925 *l.* per annum. It will be found that the charges upon the whole of the frames in Leicestershire (18,558), in one year, would be, on a fair calculation (and this was printed and circulated among the parties interested at that time), 129,906 *l.*, exceeding the poor rates, for the whole county, by 34,590 *l.* (*The Witness delivered in the paper referred to.*) I have also another paper (*producing it*), which I made out in 1847, and which shows, that out of 500 workmen employed in the borough of Leicester, the gross earnings were 193 *l.* 19 *s.* 11 ¾ *d.*; that the deductions from that amount were 77 *l.* 14 *s.* 8 *d.*, leaving net wages 116 *l.* 5 *s.* 4 ½ *d.*, or average net wages for each workman, 4 *s.* 7 ¾ *d.* per week; that was the average of 500 wrought-hose hands out of 560 or 570 persons.

Vide Appendix.

4968. Am I right in supposing you to say, that one-third of these hands were women and children?—That is the general result with reference to the whole trade; one-third were women and children.

4969. Can you say what proportion are women and what children?—I think I can. In one place the number of grown males was 722; boys, 147; females, 64; that will be one-third women and boys, and 29 over.

4970. From your knowledge of the subject, do you consider that the children of framework-knitters are generally worse educated than the children of the generality of artisans?—I am certain of that.

4971. Is that because they have less opportunity of attending schools?—Yes.

4972. Doing away with frame rent, then, would, in fact, be a benefit to them, would it not?—Yes.

4973. It would increase their opportunities of attending school?—Yes.

4974. Sir *H. Halford.*] You were examined before the Commissioner in 1844, were you not?—Yes.

4975. You told the Commissioner then that you had a frame in your house which was bought for 30 *s.*, and that it cost 10 *s.* more, making 2 *l.* in carriers and

and other things; "and I have been paying for it, for five weeks now, 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week. I should say that a frame will go for two years before it will want any more money laying out on it, with the exception of 6 *d.* or so;" is that an accurate statement?—Yes.

4976. Has it ever been questioned at all?—Never.

4977. That exhibits a very disproportionate amount of rent to the value of the frame?—Just so.

4978. In addition to the frame rent there is a standing charge, is there not?—Yes.

4979. What is the extent of that?—That ranges from 3 *d.* up to 9 *d.*, and in some cases it has been as high as 1 *s.*

4980. So that that is charged in addition to the rent when the frame belongs to the person who charges for the standing?—Yes.

4981. Making altogether a very large charge for the use of the frame?—Yes.

4982. There is a sum stopped from wages ordinarily, is there not, for taking in, that is to say, for the delivery of the materials to the workmen, and the carrying of the finished goods to the manufacturer?—Yes, that is customary.

4983. Is not that to be understood as representing a remuneration to the middleman for his trouble?—Yes, it is to remunerate him for his trouble in going backwards and forwards to the warehouse.

4984. That ought fairly to be considered to include the whole remuneration due to the middleman?—I think so.

4985. With regard to the Ticket Act, are you aware of the provisions of that Act, and the circumstances which gave rise to it?—Yes.

4986. What do you consider was the object of that Act?—The object of the Act was to ascertain, first, the amount of money that was paid by the manufacturer to the middleman, under the belief that the workman could recover any portion of wages that might be stopped by the middleman; in the second place, that there should be a veritable contract between the two parties.

4987. That is to say, that there should be a written agreement, and that the ticket should furnish particulars which might always be evidence of the actual agreement between the manufacturer and the workman?—Yes.

4988. You think that there is a general necessity for tickets, in order that there should be the means of showing a written agreement?—Yes, I do.

4989. And that in this trade, wherever there is a contract between the manufacturer and the workman, it is important that that contract should be capable of being put in evidence in a written form?—Yes.

4990. But with regard to this particular trade which is carried on through the intervention of middlemen, there is a particular necessity for a ticket, in order that the workmen may be informed of the warehouse price?—Yes, there is.

4991. You do not consider that the middleman is entitled to make any profit by a difference in price?—I do not.

4992. But without any such evidence of a written agreement, is it possible that a workman could be secured against advantage being taken of him by a difference of price?—I think not.

4993. You do not think it is possible he could have any security otherwise?—No legal security; in stating my opinion upon that question of the Ticket Act, I would say that, as far as I understood it at the time, and as far as I understand it now, I think it was needed as much as anything to prevent the frequent deductions which were made from the wages of the workmen, under the plea of defective work; it is called "docking" in Leicester. A man takes in a quantity of work; he has been under the impression probably the whole of the week that he is going to have 4 *s.* a dozen for it; he goes in on the Saturday, and the undertaker says, "I cannot give you 4 *s.*; they are not made as I expected they would be; they are too heavy, too light, or too stiff;" or he will put forward some other reason for reducing the price. The man's only chance of getting anything like justice is to go before the magistrates, under the Arbitration Law; 5 Geo. 4, c. 95; I believe that is the Act which was brought in by Mr. Hume. When he gets before the magistrates, or before the arbitrators, as a matter of course he is asked for his contract. He has no contract at all; he has no evidence to produce of the sort of goods that he

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he was to make or of the price that he was to receive. It is well known that there is only one person present when these bargains are made; the evidence would be *parole* evidence; secondary evidence must be resorted to from the manufacturer, or the middleman and his assistant; their evidence most certainly would weigh heavier than the workman's own; and if it was for no other reason than to have a fair adjudication in cases of dispute of that sort, I think a ticket is highly necessary; and I think that when they passed that Act in 1825 it was so intended; in fact I know it from Mr. Hume, who told me himself on one occasion that such was the intention of the Act.

4994. That there should always be written evidence of the contract?—Yes, written evidence; and it was only by an oversight at the time the Bill was in Committee, that those words, "If both parties are agreed," were inserted.

4995. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you explain how it is that the Ticket Act has become a dead letter?—In consequence of the vagueness of the interpretation clause and the first clause, it was supposed that the manufacturer was the real employer of the workmen, and it turned out afterwards that that was not the case; there is a case and opinion in print that was taken by the magistrates of Leicester; the one that I now produce was taken by the magistrates of Nottingham; it was never published; I wrote to the mayor, Mr. Thomas Herbert, at the time, and he forwarded me a copy of Mr. Whitehurst's opinion.

4996. Was that an opinion given upon a case in which a ticket had been refused by the employer, and the workman submitted a case to counsel as to whether or not it could be enforced?—Yes; the magistrates of Leicester submitted a case to Mr. Peacock, also a very eminent counsel.

4997. It occurred both at Leicester and at Nottingham that a case was submitted to counsel?—Yes.

4998. Did the opinion of the counsel agree on the main point?—Yes.

4999. That the Act as it now stands is not available?—I will, if you please, read Mr. Whitehurst's opinion on the case which was submitted to him; he says, "If the middleman was the mere agent to convey the work to the actual workman, and make contracts with the workman to work for the manufacturer, and not for the middleman himself, that is, if the contract of the workman was with the manufacturer, through the agency of the middleman, and not with the middleman himself, a ticket would be necessary from either the manufacturer or middleman, and such ticket must be signed by the manufacturer himself. The situation of these middlemen is somewhat anomalous; if I understand the transactions between them and the manufacturers, it is this; the manufacturers employ the middleman to get the goods manufactured by actual operatives; it being understood, and well known, the middleman is not to work any part himself; the manufacturers, however, not knowing or employing the actual operatives, and paying the middleman such sums as they agree upon, and the middleman selecting and making such bargains with the actual workmen or operatives, as they think fit. Under these circumstances, I am of opinion that in neither case is a ticket required to be given by the Act, although probably the Legislature intended to make provisions for such cases. Coupling the first section with the Interpretation Clause (section 9) a ticket is required where the person delivering the materials to be wrought into goods, to be sold on his own account (that is the manufacturer in this case), delivers goods to the person actually employed in the manufacture of the same. Now, I think that must mean the actual operative; but in this case the manufacturer never does deliver the goods to the actual operative, nor has he any connexion with him. A second case is where the agent of the manufacturer, including the person conveying the goods to the workman, delivers, &c.; but the middleman is not the mere agent or person conveying to the workman. There is no connexion or privity of contract between the manufacturer and operative; the contract, so far as the operative is concerned, is between him and the middleman; therefore I think there is no delivery by the agent of the manufacturer. The delivery by the middleman to the operative does not seem to come within the provisions of the Act, because he does not deliver as agent to the manufacturer, but on his own account; but the delivery on his own account does not seem to be within the Act, because he does not come within the Interpretation Clause, as a manufacturer. If the manufacturer delivers to the middleman, with the understanding that the middleman is to actually do the work by himself,

himself, or others whom he may employ, I think a ticket would be necessary from the manufacturer to the middleman; and it is possible that may be the real situation of the middleman; but that is a question of fact depending upon circumstances, which may vary in each case; and the magistrates must draw their own inference from such circumstance;" therefore the difficulty was, that the middleman was not the person making goods to sell for profit; if the middleman sold his own goods he would then be the manufacturer.

5000. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Or if it could be established that he was the agent of the manufacturer?—Just so.

5001. Sir *H. Halford.*] In consequence then of the defective wording of the Act, the intention of the Legislature was entirely frustrated?—It was; it has been said, that there was great difficulty in carrying the thing out, because the provisions of the Act were complicated, and so on. I have a copy here of what it really was. I have taken from the Act all that it would be necessary to fill up. One clerk would have answered the purpose in almost any warehouse; it was merely a question of pounds, shillings, and pence whether the Act should be carried out or not.

5002. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Pounds, shillings, and pence, on whose part?—On the part of the manufacturers.

5003. Sir *H. Halford.*] It was in consequence of the trouble involved in a compliance with the Act that the employers resisted it, and submitted that case to counsel?—Yes.

5004. Do you think that there was any just reason for that complaint of trouble and complication that they made?—I think not.

5005. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is not the manufacturer the best judge whether it is troublesome or not?—Manufacturers' opinions were taken at the time; in fact, this ticket system was carried out in Loughborough long before this; it gave no trouble there.

5006. And is it carried out there still?—I believe it is.

5007. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you not think that a desire on the part of some persons to make a profit out of the difference in price might actuate them in resisting the Act?—That would apply to the middlemen; there are so many ways of making alterations in the work, either by extra narrowings, a little extra width or length or a little in the weight; there are so many ways of defrauding (I will use that word) the workmen by the middlemen, that it is necessary in that case, as well as the more general case, that there should be a contract that the workmen could appeal to in cases of dispute.

5008. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does not that state of things tell against the capability of an Act of Parliament to regulate them; you say there are so many various modes?—No; because the general terms are there set down, and it is only making the figure 9 instead of the figures 14, or any other figure.

5009. If there are all these various modes of deducting from the earnings of the workmen, does not that very difficulty which presents itself operate against endeavouring to regulate the matter by Act of Parliament?—No; if a manufacturer required in a stocking 12 narrowings in the leg, that would be put down by the manufacturer, and the workman would know it; but the middleman might come and say, "You are to put 14 or 15 narrowings into this leg," and then he might take it into the warehouse for an article different from that which the workman is paid for. If this Ticket Act had been complied with it would have remedied that; this Act has been successful, I think, in the silk trade, and also it was successful in the hosiery trade, where it was fairly carried out.

5010. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you mean by its being "fairly carried out"?—Giving a ticket to the workman instead of not giving any at all. I think that where a body of men bind themselves together as the masters did at that time for the purpose of defeating the Act, that is an unfair mode of dealing. I hold here a copy of the rules and regulations of a society denominated "The Master Framework Knitters' Society." It states, "That this society be formed for the purpose of the members mutually assisting each other against any infringements of their just rights in the capacity in which they stand as masters." The real object of this society was for the maintenance of the present rates of charges, and so on, and for the defeat of this particular Act of Parliament.

5011. Sir *H. Halford.*] That society was a combination among the masters, as they call themselves, that is to say, the middlemen, to protect their own interests, was it not?—Yes; the Bill was to come into operation the first week

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in January 1846, and these rules bear date December the 27th, 1845; and to show that there was some degree of honesty in the matter, they proposed to settle by arbitration any cases that might arise between themselves and the workmen of any disputes of minor importance, such as a difference in the lengths and widths, and the prices paid. They say, "That in all minor matters which may occur between master and man, the master may call in either the president or secretary to arbitrate between them."

5012. That is to say, they lay down a mode of arbitration, entirely regardless of the provision as to arbitration in the Act of Parliament?—Yes. There was another object contemplated in another rule, the 7th, which states, "That as great inconvenience has resulted to both master and man from leaving and being discharged without notice, a notice of seven days be required and given by both parties;" that is all very fair. Then the 8th rule is, "That all masters are requested to act in accordance with the above rules, and not let a frame to any man without a certificate from his last employer;" that is the prescription clause. I suffered under that clause myself, because it is not likely that any person who takes an active part in remedying any grievance the workmen complain of would be able to get a note from his last employer.

5013. Lord *J. Manners.*] We are to understand that that last rule is an attempt on the part of the masters to combine to punish the men who do the same thing?—It was so; this was at the time of the agitation for the Ticket Act, and the abolition of frame rent and charges.

5014. Mr. *Gardner.*] Should you think it well for a number of workmen to combine not to work for employers who combine not to give more than a certain rate of wages?—I am in favour of combination, and I should like to see the law in such a state as allowed the men to combine without fear of prosecution.

5015. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does not the law allow them to do so now?—No; there are words in that Act of Parliament which are very dangerous, and which prevent combination being legal, and all combinations at the present moment are merely under sufferance; you are certainly allowed when out of work to combine, and say one to another, "We will not accept work except for such and such a price;" but if a master refuses to give that price when men are employed, and the men strike against him, or if they strike for an advance of price, and meet a person by the way side and say, "We have all struck for wages, and you had better not work for so and so," the law steps in and says that is molestation and obstruction.

5016. Not without physical force being used?—Yes; that it amounts to obstruction and molestation; those two words are so elastic in their construction as to be made to meet any circumstance.

5017. Can you mention any case in which such an application of the law has been made?—Yes, I can. There was a case in 1850 or 1851 tried before Mr. Justice Erle, at Stafford, when he stated, in his address to the jury, that it was an attempt to interfere with a man in the conducting of his business if they struck against him for an advance of wages.

5018. Mr. *Gardner.*] What were the circumstances of that case?—There was no evidence of any intimidation, and there was no attempt at anything like physical violence.

5019. You say that in a case tried before Mr. Justice Erle, at Stafford, in 1850 or 1851, the law was laid down to a certain effect by that judge; what was the name of the party whose conduct came in question in that case?—The name of the prosecutor was Mr. Perry, of Wolverhampton; I forget the names of all the defendants; but I know the name of one of them very well; that is myself. I can remember that perfectly.

5020. You were one of the defendants?—I was.

5021. Did Mr. Justice Erle lay it down that you and your friends had exercised a certain amount of molestation, which brought you within the law?—No; there was a difference in the cases. So far as I was concerned, it was a question upon the ninth count and other counts of the indictment. All the evidence was, that I had paid a certain man 12 *s.* a week, so that he should not go to work. That was all the evidence there was; and for that I was found guilty, not only of that, but of a variety of other things.

5022. Do you mean to tell us that Mr. Justice Erle laid down the law to be, that paying a man 12 *s.* for doing a certain thing amounted to a molestation?—In his opinion.

5023. What was the evidence against the other persons?—The evidence as to

to the others was, that they had induced persons to go to London, paying their expenses, and so on.

5024. But there was not in any single case any evidence of physical violence or of intimidation?—No.

5025. Nor any threats?—No; nothing of the kind.

5026. Lord *J. Manners.*] In consequence of that decision by Mr. Justice Erle, was not a Bill brought into the House of Commons by Mr. Henry Drummond for the purpose of remedying that evil for the future?—Yes.

5027. That Bill, I believe, passed through all its stages in the House of Commons, but was finally rejected by the House of Lords?—Yes; the object of it was to define the meaning of the words "obstruction" and "molestation."

5028. Mr. *Gardner.*] How many rules are there of the association of which you have spoken?—Eight.

5029. Will you read them, if you please?—"First. That this society be formed for the purpose of the members mutually assisting each other against any infringement of their just rights, in the capacity in which they stand as masters. 2dly. That this society shall consist of masters only; each member to pay 1 *s.* entrance, and one halfpenny per frame monthly for every frame he may hold, until there is a fund of 10 *l.*, when they shall cease paying until otherwise determined by a majority of the members. 3d. When there is 5 *l.* in the treasurer's hands it shall be placed in the Leicestershire Banking Company's bank, in the names of three of the society chosen for that purpose. 4th. That in all minor matters which may occur between master and man, the master may call in either the president or secretary to arbitrate between them. 5th. That there shall be a president, a secretary, and a committee of 15, appointed quarterly, five of whom shall act for one month and be succeeded by other five; all to be chosen from the members. 6th. That if any member omit paying his subscription for two months he shall not be entitled to any benefit from this society. 7th. That as great inconvenience has resulted to both master and man from leaving and being discharged without notice, a notice of seven days be required and given by both parties. 8th. That all masters are requested to act in accordance with the above rules, and not let a frame to any man without a certificate from his last employer."

5030. You object to the last clause?—I do not object to any of them. I merely produce this to show that there was a combination of the masters to defeat the object of the Ticket Act. I do not object to their combination at all.

5031. The rules which you have read do not refer to that Act at all?—No; but I state that that was the object they had in view. The Act was to come into operation in January 1846; these rules bear date on the 27th of December 1845, and from my previous knowledge of what took place at their meetings, and of the resolutions which were passed at those meetings, I know that that was the object.

5032. Mr. *Cheetham.*] After the Act came into operation, was it carried out until there was a legal decision upon it?—Yes, by a few; several cases arose out of it. Some cases were brought before the county magistrates, and others before the borough magistrates, both at Leicester and Nottingham, in petty sessions.

5033. Mr. *Gardner.*] You do not mean to say that any illegal efforts to get rid of the effect of that Act of Parliament arose out of that association?—No; I do not mean to say that.

Martis, 12° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir Henry Halford.	Sir Joshua Walmsley.
Mr. Gardner.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Packe.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Mundy.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Thomas Winters*, called in; and further Examined.

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5034. Mr. *Gardner.*] WHAT are you by business?—Now?

5035. Yes. What are you at this time?—I am the secretary of a society called "The Society for the Protection of Industry."

5036. Are you a paid officer of that society?—Yes.

5037. Have you any private business of your own?—I have had. At the present moment I have not.

5038. I see you state in answer to the first question put to you the other day, that you have worked at the stocking trade over 20 years?—Yes.

5039. How long is it since you ceased to work at it?—About eight years.

5040. In what department of the trade did you work?—The latter part in the glove trade, and for several years in the wrought hose trade and straight downs.

5041. That is, on the narrow frame?—Yes.

5042. For whom did you work?—For several persons; the last that I worked under was what is termed a second middleman; the work was made for the Messrs. Biggs under Mr. Cummins, and to Mr. Hatfield under him.

5043. You worked to a second middleman?—Yes.

5044. Do you mean to a middleman who worked to a middleman?—Yes.

5045. That is not a very beneficial arrangement for the workman, is it?—No; but it is one that cannot be avoided sometimes.

5046. You did not do that from choice, I suppose?—I worked under him for five or six years.

5047. What were the average wages that you received yourself when you were a frame-work knitter?—I do not know that I can give anything like an accurate statement now; I should suppose it would be, taking the average, when I was in and out of work, something like 12*s.* a week, or from that to 14*s.*

5048. Net wages?—Yes, I am speaking of net wages; that is in the glove trade; in the wrought hose trade it would not amount to more than 7*s.* or 8*s.*

5049. At what time were you employed on the wrought hose narrow frame; do you recollect the date of the year?—I commenced my apprenticeship with that, and went through the apprenticeship; and, as near as my memory will serve me, it was seven or eight years after that.

5050. You begun on the narrow frames and then got to the glove trade?—Yes.

5051. What was the rate of wages in the narrow frames when you first begun, as compared to what is the rate of wages now?—I began, I think, about the year 1822, or some time thereabouts; I was then working on a 24-gauge frame, what was technically called "dumps," and I think we had 7 *s.* or 7 *s.* 3 *d.* a dozen; I will not be positive to 3 *d.*

5052. In what year was that?—About 1822.

5053. What is the amount of wages paid for working those goods now?—I suppose it would be something like 4 *s.* 6 *d.* or 4 *s.* 9 *d.*

5054. I suppose

5054. I suppose you profess to have an acquaintance with the state of the trade at this moment?—Yes; but you will bear in mind that I have acquired it from continual correspondence which I have had with some parties, and from visits which I paid in Leicestershire the end of last year.

5055. Do you think that the wages generally are lower than they were, or merely that they are lower in some particular branches; I think it is admitted on all hands that in some branches of the trade the wages are lower, but there is conflicting evidence on the general question?—I think they are lower in all branches.

5056. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you know, of your own knowledge, before you left Leicester, of any cases in which full rent was taken, and only half work given out?—Yes, I do, of my own knowledge; it has been taken of myself.

5057. Do you know of any cases of your own knowledge in which full rent was taken in cases of sickness?—That has never occurred to me individually. Many persons have stated to me that it has been their case; that they have paid full charges when they have been ill.

5058. Have you reason to believe, from your knowledge of the trade, that the practice of taking full frame rent for half work, and full frame rent in cases of sickness, is general as a rule, or is it not rather the exception?—I think the practice of taking full frame rent in cases of short work, or what is technically termed stints, is the rule and not the exception. It is the rule to take full rent when frames are partially employed. I am not prepared to say to what extent the practice is carried on in cases of sickness, but I have heard many complaints made to me by different parties in different parts of the county of that practice.

5059. Mr. *Gardner.*] When you say you have heard many complaints made on the subject, what do you mean; you have heard a dozen or two, perhaps?—Two or three hundred, probably.

5060. Have you any other ground for believing it to be the rule?—I was not speaking of its beingthe rule in the case of sickness, but in the time of short work.

5061. You say it is the rule to take full rent when frames are only partially employed?—Yes.

5062. That happened, you say, to yourself?—Yes.

5063. Who were you working to at that time?—To a person named Samuel Atfield, and several others.

5064. They all did it?—Yes, all.

5065. All the persons who employed you exacted the full rent?—Yes; I do not know of a single exception. There was, by the bye, one exception, but he could scarcely be termed a middleman; that was a case of a narrow frame worked under Messrs. Biggs; I used to take the work in myself at that time; that was a person named Job Cramp, who lived in Yeoman-street; I used to take the work in myself, and in that particular instance it was not the practice.

5066. How many employers, middlemen, or manufacturers did you work to during your own career?—Probably a dozen.

5067. And all except one adopted the practice of charging full rent?—Yes.

5068. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you believe that to be the ordinary practice of the trade in Leicester?—It is the ordinary practice.

5069. At the present moment?—It was in the winter time when I was down there, so far as my information went.

5070. When you hear it stated, as you have heard, having been in this room for some time, that such is not the practice, you do not accord with that opinion at all?—I do not; and I think that many of the parties who have stated it not to be the practice have stated it from ignorance of the fact, because I think the manufacturers have not the means of knowing; the only parties that they are brought in connexion with are the middlemen.

5071. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you not consider a man like Mr. Loveday to be a very respectable authority?—He can only speak, I think, of his own particular case, and of his own particular village; I do not think he would go beyond that.

5072. I think Mr. Loveday and Mr. Hachett both said their impression was that

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that such cases were extremely rare?—They stated that such was their impression; but, at the same time, I think they stated that their knowledge only extended to Wigston.

5073. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] They referred to their own particular practice?—To their own particular practice, and their own particular village.

5074. Mr. *Gardner.*] They went much farther than that; but do you think it possible for a man to carry on his business like Mr. Loveday, giving so great an advantage to his rivals as that practice must give, the charging full rent for half work?—I am not in a position to question anything Mr. Loveday may have said; Mr. Loveday's statement may be quite correct, and the men's statement may be quite correct also.

5075. Assuming those statements to be correct, do you not think that those gentlemen carry on their business with great disadvantage as compared with the bulk of the trade, who are guilty of this, which you call extortionate practice?—No; I do not think so.

5076. Why not?—There is a great deal of difference among middlemen in their expenses; one middleman may live at the rate of probably 200 *l.* a year, while another will live at the rate of 50 *l.* a year; in that case there would be a wide difference; I know several master-men who make it their business to go to the warehouse almost every day; I suppose Mr. Hackett would be one of that class; in that case he would be called on to expend a great deal of money which Mr. Loveday would not.

5077. Supposing there to be an equal share of intelligence and good management; the middleman who carried on his business on a fair principle would carry it on at a great loss, would he not, as compared with the bulk of the trade, who take the unfair advantage of exacting full rent for half work?—Yes; if they were all like Mr. Loveday, if his statement is correct, there would not be the grievance to complain of that there is; but I think at the same time, that Mr. Loveday spoke of the benefit of spreading work; if he did, all I say is, that I dissent from him.

5078. Do you admit that there are middlemen who carry on their business upon the system of never charging full rent, unless there is full work?—There may be some odd cases of that kind; I found one out of twelve.

5079. Do you not think that that odd person carries on his business at a great disadvantage as compared with his rivals, who take these unfair advantages?—Yes.

5080. Mr. *Biggs.*] I think you are in favour of legislation on this subject, are you not?—I am.

5081. Do you not think that the immediate effect of any alteration of the existing system would be to throw out of employment thousands of old men, women, and children?—I stated in my evidence on Friday, that supposing it to throw out of employment, say one-third of the persons engaged in the trade, there is a third composed of women and children who are not the heads of families.

5082. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to say, that in your opinion legislation, which would have the effect of throwing out of employment that third of the population which is represented by women and children, would be desirable?—I do not say that it would throw them out of employment; it was stated, I think, by Mr. John Biggs, that in his opinion that would be the result, but I do not know that it would be so even in bad, much less in good times, because if in good times the whole of the frames are required, they would also be required then; the observation, therefore, can only extend to bad trade; and I say that in that case we have a right to suppose that the persons thrown out of employment would not be the heads of families, but would merely be the younger branches of families, and there would be the same amount of money coming in.

5083. Is it not the fact, that this branch of industry is one that can be practised to a great extent as well by women or children as by men?—By women it may; there are many good women hands in the wrought hose branch.

5084. They can turn out the work as well, and can do almost as much as the men, can they not?—Yes.

5085. Do you think it desirable to throw by legislative enactment difficulties in the way of the employment of those women?—If there was no oppression exercised,

exercised, I should not ask the Legislature to interfere, but it is in consequence of the oppression that exists on the part of middlemasters towards the workmen that I ask the Legislature to interfere.

5086. In the first place, what do you mean by "oppression"?—I mean this by oppression. If I take a frame at a shilling a week, I expect to have the free use of that frame the whole of the week; if I am prevented from having the free use of it the whole of the week, I say that is an oppression, because they take my money without allowing me the use of the machine; that I call an oppression.

5087. I am aware you consider that an oppression, and I do not stop to argue the question with you; but my question is, do you think that any legislation which would have the effect of throwing difficulties in the way of the employment of these women, who you say can work as well, or nearly as well, as men, would be beneficial?—I think it would have that tendency only in bad times.

5088. At the very time when the wages of these women and children are of the most importance to their families?—My idea is, that they would receive the same amount of money in the family, and save the expense of the charges and rent, which would add more money to the general income of the family, and therefore they would be benefited by being out of work rather than by being in work.

5089. Can you make it clear to the Committee that the result of an Act of Parliament would be to give as much wages for the work of one man as for the work of two or three?—If there is no alteration in the prices that would be the result.

5090. But do you guarantee that there shall be no alteration of prices?—I cannot answer that.

5091. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Yes, you can; you do not guarantee it?—I do not guarantee any amount of wages; you cannot regulate wages.

5092. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is the object then of desiring any legislation upon this subject?—The object is, as far as I have gathered, to prevent the wages of the workmen from being taken in any of these shapes; either for standing room, or for taking in when there is no taking in, or for rent when the frame is not used, and other different items of that description.

5093. But the sum represented by these charges and exactions goes into the employer's pocket instead of the workman's, and operates, in point of fact, as a reduction of wages, does it not?—I do not think it all goes into the manufacturer's pocket; I never did think so; it goes generally into the middleman's pocket.

5094. It operates, at all events, *pro tanto*, as a reduction of wages?—It is an unnatural deduction from wages; if a man said to me, "I have been in the habit of giving you 4*s.* 6*d.* a dozen, but I will now only give you 4*s.*," that I could understand; but if he says, "I will give you 4*s.* 6*d.* a dozen," and then at the end of the week he takes 6*d.* in another form, over which I have no control, that is an indirect taxation which I object to.

5095. You admit that these things operate as a reduction of wages, but an unnatural reduction?—Unnatural and unfair.

5096. How can you call a contract unfair, into which a man enters with his eyes open?—There is the mistake; I do not think he does enter into it with his eyes open; if he had the means of knowing it beforehand it would be all very well.

5097. If he had the means of knowing what beforehand?—If he had the means of knowing the amount of work or the amount of money he would have to receive at the end of the week, coupled with the amount of charges which were certain, there would be something like fairness about it; but then he does not know that; he may have work to do for one day, and not for the next, and he may have work again the next day and not the day after; he only knows that part of the contract which is, that a certain amount of money will be taken from his earnings, but he does not know the other part, as to how much he will get, and therefore I say it is not a contract; there is no mutuality about it.

5098. Then the long and short of what you mean to tell us is that the operative population of the hosiery district enter into engagements with their employers at the beginning of the week, without knowing in the least what the result of their labours will be at the end of it?—Just so.

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5099. And you call upon us to pass an Act of Parliament to arrange what shall be their weekly earnings?—No, I do not do that.

5100. Then what is it that you call upon us to pass an Act of Parliament for?—It is that the workman shall have the fruit of his industry; that he shall have, in fact, what he earns; and then if a man is necessitated to take what are called independent frames, or if it becomes necessary for him to engage one of those frames, there is no objection to it; but we do object to the stopping of a workman's wages without his consent under various pretexts.

5101. Do you mean to say, then, that a man has not now what he earns?—I do say that.

5102. Just have the goodness to make that clear to me, for I confess I cannot understand it?—I mentioned a case, I think, on Friday last. It certainly was a very extreme case, but I mentioned it because it might happen that other extreme cases might occur of the same sort. It was a case in which a man appealed to the magistrates of Leicester, and in which his master took 9 *s.* 1½ *d.* out of 9 *s.* 2 *d.*; the magistrates dismissed the case, because it was the custom of the trade. I say this, that if that man could only earn that sum, and they could take it all in the shape of charges, that is an oppression requiring the aid of Parliament to correct.

5103. But I ask you, as a man of sense, whether you have not often heard of a man carrying on his business with a large capital, and with great wear and tear of his brains, and yet, at the end of the year, not realising 5 *l.*, and sometimes being a loser to the extent of 20 *l.*, or 200 *l.*, or 2,000 *l.*; do you think it a case for legislative interference, where you find that a man has been working very hard, that he is a good citizen, that he has invested his capital in business, and that at the end of the year, instead of having made a handsome return for his capital, he is a loser to the extent of 1,000 *l.*?—That is a question I can scarcely answer.

5104. You say this is an exceptional case, in which a man at the end of a week's work receives only a halfpenny; of course there may be circumstances which would explain that; but the fact is, that he gets a halfpenny at the end of the week; then you say, that, with a view to meet such cases as that, we are to pass an Act of Parliament; what, then, I ask is this: whether exceptional cases, such as a man working hard for a whole year, risking his capital and so forth, and being at the end of the year a loser to the extent of 100 *l.* or 1,000 *l.*, are in your opinion to be met by legislative interference?—I do not think that that is a parallel case.

5105. Why not; where is the difference?—In the case of the workman his expenses are certain, and are according to the amount of work he has to do; but if you take the case of the other man, we do not know whether he has any money to start with himself, or whether his transactions have been by bills, or whether he has been over-speculating.

5106. I am supposing the case of an honest average respectable tradesman; you admit, do you not, that such men have been known to work hard and industriously, and yet have been in a worse position at the end of the year than they were at the beginning?—There have been parties who have had losses in that way; and if those losses are occasioned by the fraudulent act of another party, I should ask for legislative interference.

5107. Will you point out the fraud that was practised in the case of the poor man to whom you have referred; of course it is a hard thing to have worked for a halfpenny, but then I want you to point out in what the fraud consisted?—I think that if a man pretends to let a frame to a party to work in the whole of the week at a certain rent, and in the middle of the week, or at the beginning of the week, he will not find work for him or allow him to get work elsewhere, and takes the whole rent and charges from the first money earned, that looks very much like a fraud.

5108. But upon your own showing, the workman in the case referred to could not say that, because you tell us the custom with the bulk of the trade is to do the very reverse?—But I also stated that there are a variety of charges; that the charges differ in different branches of the trade, and in different parts of the county.

5109. You stated in your evidence on Friday that the charges vary according to the will and temper of the master; do you adhere to that?—I did not intend to say "temper," because the temper has nothing to do with it; that word dropped from me accidentally.

5110. You

5110. You adhere to the statement that the charges vary according to the will and disposition of the master?—Yes.

5111. How does it happen that the master is so perfectly able to increase these stoppages, and to reduce them so as unfairly to reduce the wages of the workmen *ad libitum*?—Simply, I think, on account of the impossibility that exists for the parties to withstand it; the men are completely at the mercy of the masters.

5112. And to what is that owing?—I must illustrate that. I will suppose a person, a farmer, for instance, who takes his grain to the market; he may have plenty of grain at home, and in that case he can hold his goods over till he can make his price; but that is not the case with the workman, who lives entirely from hand to mouth. Many of the masters are members of the Boards of Guardians, and the principle of the poor law is, that no man shall receive parochial relief who can get work at any price.

5113. Do you consider that to be a proper state of the law?—I should like to see it amended very much.

5114. But that, in all thickly-peopled countries, is the lot of all persons who have no property except their labour, is it not?—So far as England is concerned; I do not know from experience how it may be with regard to other nations.

5115. Is there any other element whatever except the amount of population, as compared to the amount of capital in the country, which determines the rate of wages, and if so, what?—It is hard for me to say what determines the rate of wages; there are many different opinions upon that matter.

5116. Will you tell me why, in your opinion, workmen in Canada, America, and Australia get higher wages than they get in Leicestershire?—I have heard it stated that they do get higher wages in America; that may be influenced by the currency laws there, or many other things.

5117. You are aware that in Canada and in America there is a very thin, and in Australia a still thinner population, and that the wages in those countries increase in proportion to the fewness of the hands?—Wages, I understand from the reports in the newspapers, have been very high, but I think they are getting down lower there now, as they are here; the general desire and determination on the part of one section of the political economists being to sell in the dearest and to buy in the cheapest market they can.

5118. I am asking what places these Leicestershire stocking-makers at the mercy of their employers, so that the employers may vary their stoppages, and reduce their wages, according to their good pleasure?—I think I have stated that; I do not care a toss about the wages, so long as the workman has not these charges taken out of the money he earns; I do not care whether they are a farthing, a shilling, or a pound, so long as a power does not exist to deprive him of his earnings before he receives it.

5119. You do not care whether his wages are increased or not, provided the way in which he receives them is altered; is that what you mean?—I think he ought to be paid his money in full, and I believe the effect of that would be to increase his wages.

5120. What do you mean by being paid in full?—Being paid the full amount he may earn; that is to say, if I earn 6*s.* let me have the 6*s.*, and do not allow another person, without my consent, and on the plea that it is the custom of trade, to take 3*s.* or 4*s.* away from me.

5121. But you cannot be said to have earned 6*s.* if you have engaged to pay your employer 1*s.* out of your earnings for the rent of the frame?—But that engagement has been entered into on the understanding that I should have the free use of the frame for the whole of the week, and I am prevented from having it, by his refusal to find me work, or allow me to obtain it elsewhere, to be worked up in his frame, for which I have to pay rent.

5122. Your own evidence shows that there is no understanding of the kind, but that the understanding is quite the other way; you tell me that the rule of the trade is to charge full rent for half work?—Just so.

5123. That rule of the trade must be a matter of perfect notoriety among the persons who enter into these engagements?—But they enter into them under protest.

5124. How do you mean under protest?—The workmen have generally complained. I should say that every month almost there have been complaints week after week and day after day. Complaints have been made by the work-

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men for many years against this system. They have petitioned the House of Commons; they have petitioned the manufacturers; they have held meetings; they have adopted all courses that they thought could be adopted to remedy this grievance, but they have done so without success.

5125. What the workmen complain of, I apprehend, is the smallness of their wages, and they imagine that that is owing to these stoppages?—They complain of the system of spreading work for the purpose of exacting full rent and charges. When a man gets plenty of money you do not hear him complain much, but if you limit his supply of work (because it all comes to that), and take from him part of what he earns, then he does complain, and workmen will ever complain while that is the case.

5126. It is quite natural that a man should complain about anything that tends to reduce his wages, which you say is the effect of these stoppages?—Yes.

5127. But it does not follow from that that you can prevent such a reduction of wages as is represented by these stoppages, by Act of Parliament; that is what we want you to show us?—I think it is a case similar to that in which the Legislature have already interfered; it is no new principle of legislation; the Legislature interfered as respects bread and cheese, bacon, wearing apparel, and so on; they interfered, I believe, with the females working in mines; they interfered with respect to children and females in the factories; and I think they interfered in the case of the coalwhippers in London, as to how they should be paid, and that they regulated them in many respects; that, I believe, is a very strong case; it is no new principle of legislation.

5128. I should dispute that the cases are in the smallest degree analogous; the Legislature interfered, and I think very justly, to prevent the cupidity of parents employing their young children a greater number of hours than was suitable to their tender years; but the interference of the Legislature in the case of children employed in factories is not a parallel case to this: was not the object of that interference to prevent the cupidity of parents from employing their children a greater number of hours than was suitable to their tender years?—That was only one portion of it; the other portion was to prevent the manufacturers from employing them; and the object also was to give to the children a chance of education.

5129. They were all moral considerations?—Yes.

5130. Not financial?—No.

5131. Do you know Mr. Baines, a manufacturer of Leicester?—I only know him by sight.

5132. Mr. Billson?—Yes.

5133. Mr. Corah?—Yes.

5134. Mr. Walker?—Yes.

5135. You are aware, are you not, that those gentlemen have been examined before this Committee?—I was not aware of Mr. Walker having been examined; I was aware that Mr. Corah was here.

5136. Are you aware that those manufacturers, one and all, deny that in their own cases they ever take full rent for half work?—Yes.

5137. They employ a great number of frames, do they not?—Yes.

5138. You are aware, are you not, that those gentlemen also deny having taken full rent when parties have been sick?—I think they did deny that.

5139. And that they also asserted that they did not believe it to be the custom of the trade to take full rent for half work, or in cases of sickness?—I believe they said that.

5140. What is your opinion with regard to those statements?—I believe that their opinions are not founded on fact.

5141. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You do not mean as regards their own practice, but as to their general knowledge of what is passing in the trade?—Yes; I do not say that they stated that which they knew to be wrong.

5142. Sir *H. Halford.*] Did they not generally disclaim a knowledge of the practices of middlemen?—Yes.

5143. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that the effect of such an Act of Parliament as has been proposed would be to raise the wages of the workmen?—I think it would in times of depression; I do not say it would when everybody was fully employed.

5144. You assert that, in your opinion, the effect of it would be to raise the wages of the workmen?—At certain times.

5145. In

5145. In bad times?—In bad times.

5146. Do you think it possible to raise wages by Act of Parliament?—I am not speaking of the mode of raising wages by Act of Parliament; that used to be practised a good many years ago; I think the last Act was an Act respecting the silk weavers of London, where the justices said a man shall have so much money for so much work; if that is the meaning of legislating for wages, I disapprove of it; I do not think this is legislating for wages; there are two modes of legislating for wages; it was then the custom for the justices in petty sessions to draw out a tariff of prices, and every master was compelled to pay a certain price; not more, and not less; that is what I call regulating wages; in this case it is merely to say that a man shall have what he earns, leaving the bargain to be made between himself and his employer as to what his wages shall be.

5147. If it does not raise the wages of the workmen, can you tell the Committee what good an Act of Parliament could possibly do?—I have stated before that I think it would raise their wages in bad times, in consequence of the spreading of the work over a larger number of frames than is necessary, and taking rents from the whole; the work which was done by three could very well be done by two, and the expenses paid by one would go into the pockets of the other two; they would have 18 *s.* a week with three frames, whereas with only two they would have 1 *l.*

5148. That is still your opinion?—Yes.

5149. Mr. *Gardner.*] You think their wages would be raised about 2 *s.* in the pound in bad times?—They would be raised in proportion to the expenses charged to the third person.

5150. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that the effect of passing an Act of Parliament on the subject would be to increase the demand for their labour?—No.

5151. Do you think that their wages can be increased without an increased demand for their labour?—I was not speaking of the general rate of wages, but rather of the money which is stopped from three persons in respect to work which might be done by two; I say the money earned by the three would go into the pockets of two, and the rent and charges upon the third would go into the pockets of the two.

5152. You say that in slack trade the effect of abolishing frame rents would be to throw a great number of the women and children out of employ?—I do not say that that would be the necessary effect; but taking the evidence of the other gentlemen to be correct, we have a right to suppose the result would be that the one-third would be the younger branches of families.

5153. Do you mean that it would give as much work to the head of the family as is given by the partial employment of several persons?—Yes.

5154. And that the others might obtain more or less profitable employment in other branches?—That is what I mean.

5155. *Chairman.*] And there would be only one frame rent to pay, instead of paying rent for frames in the hands of the younger branches of the family?—Just so.

5156. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Then you think that full employment for the head of the family is better than the partial employment of several members, and that they would, at the same time, save the rent of one or two frames, where there were three or four?—That is my opinion.

5157. Mr. *Gardner.*] Then the operation of this Act, you think, would be to put as much money into the pocket of one person at the end of the week as is at present distributed among two or three?—Yes, in the case of stints or spreading work.

5158. But that is an ordinary practice, is it not?—Yes, but it is not so in what is termed good times; there are times when all the frames are employed.

5159. The effect of a legislative enactment would be to put, in bad times, as much wages into the pocket of one individual, for the same amount of work, as two or three would have before?—No; I said the effect would be to give to two as much as three had had before; that is supposing each third goes out.

5160. Then the tendency of your legislation is certainly to put out of work the women and children?—In those times; and I am satisfied that it would be for their benefit; from my experience and knowledge of different trades in different parts of the country, there is plenty of room for them.

5161. Do you think it sound policy for a legislative body deliberately, in the case of a manufacture exposed to competition, to substitute dear for cheap labour, the

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the labour of a full-grown man for that of a woman, when the fact is that the labour of the women is largely productive, if not quite as productive as that of the men?—I have never stated that that would be the natural result; I do not believe anything of the kind, nor do I think it is necessary; because if a manufacturer feels disposed to distribute his work without charges, he can do it as well as he could with them.

5162. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Then all you mean is simply this, that where there is only sufficient work for one or two frames you would not have that work spread over five or six hands, for the purpose of merely receiving frame rents from the whole?—That is just the question; that is my view.

5163. Mr. *Gardner.*] But, in bad times, the manufacturers say that is the only way in which they can carry on their business at all?—Yes; that is the statement of the manufacturers; that they get their profits from the frames instead of from the goods; that, however, in my opinion, is not the best mode.

5164. And that by that means they are able to make their goods at a lower cost, so as to indemnify themselves against the risk of keeping them until a better market comes, and also to give the workpeople partial employment; and that they say is a legitimate and just principle in both respects; what is your opinion upon that subject?—My answer to the first question would be this, that if that is really the practice, and if it is acknowledged by themselves to be the practice, it is not the best mode of getting profit; because, instead of getting it out of the goods manufactured, which is the only legitimate mode, I apprehend, of getting profit, it is getting it out of the labourer in the shape of frame-rent when the frame is not required.

5165. Usually these frame rents operate, as you have admitted, as a reduction of wages; therefore the manufacturers get their goods made at a less cost; and they say that in bad times they would not make goods at all if it were not for this method of reducing wages, for it is, in fact, after all, only a method of reducing wages?—The rent is only one element in the deductions; there are all the other deductions made by middlemen, as well as the difference in many cases in the price that has been paid by the middleman to the workmen, and the price given by the manufacturer to the middleman. There was one case I intended to have mentioned on Friday, but it escaped my memory. It is the case of a Mr. Hancock, one of the managers of a large firm in Belper. As soon as the Ticket Act came into operation, he made a discovery that a person had been taking no less than 8*s.* out of 22*s.*; there was that difference in the price of a dozen pairs of stockings paid by the manufacturer to the middlemen, and what the middleman paid to the workmen.

5166. Sir *H. Halford.*] One of his middlemen, do you mean?—Yes, one of his middlemen.

5167. Mr. *Gardner.*] But the effect of the rent system is, that the manufacturer in bad times, by using this means of reducing wages, is able to make his goods at a less cost, and therefore to run the risk of making more goods than the market will immediately take off, thereby giving partial employment to his workmen at a time when they would be otherwise unemployed?—Yes; but at the same time I think it would be much better if they would adopt the same plan as is adopted in other parts of the country and in other trades; and if you cannot manufacture to advantage at a certain price, the more honourable way would be to reduce the wages direct; to say, "We have been giving you 4*s.* 6*d.*, but we will now give you 4*s.* 3*d.* only."

5168. Suppose, after you had prevented this indirect reduction of wages by Act of Parliament, a direct reduction greater than the sum represented by the present indirect method were to take place, would you plume yourselves then upon your Act of Parliament?—That would be a question for consideration when it occurred. We have that evil now to contend against as well as the others. We have the evil of increased taxation in the shape of rent and charges, and also the other which you speak of as direct reductions.

5169. Do you see any security that would be given in such an Act as you propose, merely providing for the abolition of frame rent and charges, against a direct reduction of wages?—I could not pretend to ask the Legislature to interfere to regulate the wages of the workmen, or to say what wages they should have at any time.

5170. You see nothing that would prevent a reduction of wages even greater than the reduction which is brought about by the present indirect, and, as you say, improper process?—I think that by such an Act of Parliament framework-knitters would be placed on a level with operatives in other trades. They must take their chance about reductions or advances, and follow the advice of Mr. John Biggs, who once said, "You must take the bull by the horns when you can get him."

5171. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is there any other point that you think it necessary the Committee should be informed of?—There was one thing I should have liked to have spoken of. It has been stated by some witnesses that these questions have been got up by agitators and by agitation. Now, in my opinion there are two sorts of agitation; one for vicious purposes and one for legitimate purposes, and, so far as this is concerned, I think it is a legitimate purpose. The object is to get rid of a great grievance; and, speaking from my own knowledge, connected as I have been with the framework-knitters, I say, that so far from this being any benefit to the "agitators," it is quite the reverse; and it is the general opinion of the framework-knitters that this system should be prevented by Act of Parliament. That is the desire of the men themselves, and their general opinion.

5172. They consider themselves to be suffering under an injustice, which they desire to have redressed?—Yes.

5173. Mr. *Gardner.*] It is open to any persons in this country to agitate any question whatever within the law; but I wish to ask you what is the object of the society of which you are the paid secretary?—The objects of that society are to secure, as far as circumstances will admit, what the workmen conceive to be a fair day's wages for a fair day's work; and also for referring disputes between masters and workmen to arbitration; and I am very proud to say, that four out of five disputes have been so settled. Another object of the society is to promote the interests of the workmen in Parliament as far as possible.

5174. To bring to bear what political influence you can obtain in Parliament in support of what you conceive to be the true views of political economy?—Yes.

5175. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Are the members of your society, or are you, directly or indirectly concerned for or paid by the framework-knitters of Leicester?—Not a farthing.

5176. Have you any interest whatever in giving your evidence here on behalf of the framework-knitters?—None, either direct or indirect.

5177. Then your society is not directly or indirectly concerned with them in any way?—No.

5178. And your evidence is given merely because you believe it to be necessary for the framework-knitters of Leicester, you having been one of them for a length of time, and having experienced in your own person what you conceive to be somewhat of hard dealing?—That is it; it is nothing more than that; we have not a single framework-knitter belonging to us, and have not had for many years; it is only from the general knowledge I have of their sufferings, from having suffered myself, and from being asked to give my evidence here, that I have tendered my evidence to the Committee. I have no interest in the matter either direct or indirect.

5179. Mr. *Biggs.*] The principle of your association is to protect wages by legislation, is it?—No, it is not that.

5180. That is one of the principles, is it not?—One of the principles, as in the case of the truck; or, in fact, any legislation that affects the interests of the labourers; we do not go beyond that. There was one other thing I intended to mention; it is with regard to an error of Mr. Corah's; it referred to myself. I think he stated in his evidence that I had been agitating in Leicester with Elliot and Buckby in the Pasture; I merely wish to say that I never in my life attended a meeting in the Pasture with either Mr. Elliot or Mr. Buckby, or with anybody else; and that I have never been paid anything by the Leicester framework-knitters for the last nine years, but, on the contrary, it has cost me a good deal of money to assist them in the way I have.

Mary Stevens, called in; and Examined.

Mary Stevens.

12 June 1855.

5181. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] WHERE do you reside?—At Stony Staunton.

5182. How long have you lived there?—I have never lived anywhere else.

5183. Did you reside at Leicester at any time?—No; my father and mother resided in Leicester.

5184. What was your father's name?—James Goodman.

5185. He resided in Leicester?—He lived there about four years.

5186. Did your mother reside in Leicester also?—Yes.

5187. Were you with them at any period?—No; only going to see them sometimes.

5188. Do you remember your father's death?—He has been dead twelve months the beginning of last May.

5189. Was he a framework-knitter?—Yes.

5190. Whose frame did he use?—When he went to live at Leicester he worked under Mr. Harris; he did not work a wrought-hose frame then.

5191. Whose frame had he when he died?—It was my mother that worked in the frame.

5192. Whose frame was it that your mother worked in?—Mr. Corah's.

5193. How long had she it?—She had it a long time; I do not know how long; a long time.

5194. Were you with your mother when she was working in the frame?—No.

5195. How long before your mother's death did you go to see her?—Seven weeks.

5196. And she had the frame all that time?—Yes.

5197. Did she work any part of that time?—She worked up to one week of her death.

5198. Did you assist her in any way?—No.

5199. She worked to within a week of her death, did she?—Yes.

5200. Had she paid her rent?—I took her work in; she had never been in for seven weeks.

5201. After she died you took her work in?—Yes.

5202. To whom?—Mr. Corah.

5203. Did you see Mr. Corah himself?—When I went into the warehouse with my mother's work, young Mr. Corah took it in, and he asked me who I was, and I told him I had brought in Mrs. Goodman's work; he said, "What Mrs. Goodman?" I said, "Old Mrs. Goodman;" and he said, "That old woman?" and I said, "Yes;" he said, "Where is she?" J said, "She is dead and buried, sir;" he said, "How long ago?" I said, "Last Sunday, and she was buried on Wednesday;" this was the Saturday following; he said, "How much rent?" and I told him six weeks, and he said, "Seven;" I took in three dozen and a half of hose.

5204. What had you to receive for that; how much a dozen?—Three shillings and threepence a dozen.

5205. That came to 11*s.* 4½*d.*?—Yes.

5206. You took in the goods completed?—I took in those hose and the stuff, and made up her accounts, and he told me I must wait for my money till his father came; he was not in, and I did so; when the father came in, young Mr. Corah told him that I had brought in old Mrs. Goodman's work, for she was dead and buried; and he said, "How long?" and the son said, "A week;" the father said, "What rent is there?" and he said "Seven weeks;" and I told him she never worked the week before she died, and he laid me down 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, and I picked it up and went out, and then I went back and said, "Mr. Corah, you have not given me the right money;" and he said, "Why not?" and I said, "If you take the whole of the rent I want 4 *s.* 4 *d.*," and he said, "Do you tell Mr. Goodman that I want six ounces of stuff."

5207. What did Mr. Corah say further?—He never spoke any more, nor did I; I took up the money and came away.

5208. Did he refuse to give you any more?—No, that was what he laid me down.

5209. He laid you down 3 *s.* 6 *d.* instead of 11 *s.* 4½ *d.*, deducting 6½ *d.* for the stuff and 7 *s.* for rent?—Yes.

5210. After

5210. After you had told him that your mother had been ill six weeks and was dead, and had been buried a week?—Yes; he took a week's rent for the w that she died in and the six weeks before.

5211. Lord *J. Manners.*] You say he told you to tell Mr. Goodman; what Mr. Goodman was that?—My brother.

5212. Mr. Corah said she was six ounces deficient in stuff?—Yes.

5213. Was that so?—She was deficient six ounces of stuff.

5214. Did your brother think she was?—When we weighed up she was not quite straight.

5215. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you a clear recollection of what passed?—That was all that passed, every word as true as it was spoken.

5216. Who was present beside yourself?—No one.

5217. You first spoke to young Mr. Corah, who told you to wait till his father came?—Yes.

5218. And when his father came you got paid 3 *s.* 6 *d.*?—Three shillings and sixpence he gave me; half-a-crown and a shilling he laid down.

5219. And what did he say?—He said, "Here is your money," and I picked it up and went out of the room with it, and looked at it, and said, "I have not the right money;" my brother had told me that if he took the whole of the rent I should want 4 *s.* 4½ *d.*; and so I went back, and I said, "Mr. Corah, you have not given me the right money;" and he said, "Why not?" and I said, "If you take the whole rent, I want 4 *s.* 4½ *d.*;" and he said, "You must tell Mr. Goodman I want six ounces of stuff;" and I never spoke any more, nor did he.

5220. To whom did you deliver that money?—To my brother.

5221. Who is your brother working for now?—Mr. Harris.

5222. And your brother would testify to this?—Yes, that I gave him half-a-crown and a shilling; that was all the money I received from Mr. Corah.

5223. And you are ready to make oath that this is true?—Yes; and Mr. Corah, if he were here, I think could not deny it.

5224. Lord *J. Manners.*] Did Mr. Corah tell you how much he deducted for the six ounces of stuff that was deficient?—No; he told me I was to tell Mr. Goodman that he wanted six ounces of stuff.

5225. Had your mother taken any work in for the previous six weeks?—No.

4226. That was all the work she had done?—That was all the work she had done.

4227. For the seven weeks?—Yes.

4228. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say that your mother, Mrs. Goodman, worked at this frame till within a week of her death?—She worked in the frame five weeks; because one week she was ill, and the other week she died in.

5229. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Mr. Corah took payment for seven weeks' rent?—Yes.

5230. Your mother had never received any money for goods made in that frame during those seven weeks?—No; my brother told me she had not taken any hose in.

5231. And Mr. Corah knew, from you assertion, that your mother had been ill?—Yes, I told him that she was ill.

5232. Mr. *Gardner.*] Did Mr. Corah make any inquiries as to the circumstances?—No; he only asked me how long she had been dead, and I told him she died on Sunday, and was buried on Wednesday.

5233. On what day was it that you had this conversation?—The Saturday following.

5234. These three-and-a-half dozen of stockings were in fact the produce of the work of your mother during the five weeks?—Yes.

5235. Sir *H. Halford.*] Had there been any materials received for those two weeks; suppose she had been well, had she the materials for work?—She had the stuff; I took the stuff back that was not worked up

5236. Mr. *Gardner.*] Was that about the average amount of work that your mother did, three dozen and a half in five weeks?—I do not know.

5237. Was she in perfect health?—No, she had not been in good health for a long time.

5238. During these five weeks she only made three dozen and a half?—No.

Mr. *W. Richmond.*

Mr. *William Richmond*, called in; and Examined.

12 June 1855.

5239. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] ARE you a Framework-knitter?—Yes.

5240. In what branch do you work?—The glove branch.

5241. How long have you been employed in that business?—Twenty-three years.

5242. By whom are you now employed?—By Messrs. Preston & Company, of Leicester.

5243. Have you been employed by Messrs. Preston & Company all that time?—No; I have been employed by the firm to which I now work 11 years.

5244. You have heard a great deal about the difference of opinion that exists with regard to the rent system and the net system; what system do you work under?—Under the net wages system.

5245. How long have you worked under the net wages system?—Nine years.

5246. You worked under the charges system for several years, did you not?—Yes.

5247. Then you are able to tell us the difference between the one and the other?—Yes.

5248. Which is the most satisfactory system to you?—The net wages system.

5249. In what way is that system more satisfactory than the other?—In this way; I receive my wages in full without any deduction.

5250. What do you mean by deduction?—I mean that under the charges system I should have to earn 3*s.* 7*d.* as charges before I received anything for myself, and under the net wages system whatever I earn I have.

5251. But you agree to receive a less sum than you did formerly as the price of the work you produce?—Yes.

5252. You speak of 3*s.* 7*d.*; what do you mean by that; what are those charges for?—One-and-sixpence for frame rent, 1*s.* 6*d.* for shop room and superintendence, and 7*d.* for winding.

5253. Those are the general charges under the present system?—Yes, of the lowest kind, the narrow frames; there are more charges in wider frames than those.

5254. How many frames can a middleman superintend?—Thirty, or more; say 30.

5255. How much money would a middleman derive from attending to 30 frames?—At that ratio he would get 2*l.* 5*s.* if he superintended 30 frames.

5256. It requires a clever intelligent man to manage that number of frames, does it not?—Of course it requires a person with some skill and ability to keep accounts and arrange matters, but nothing very extraordinary; there are journeymen who would be equally as clever as they, provided they were in the same position.

5257. Do you consider 2 *l.*, or 2 *l.* 10*s.* a week large wages for a middleman to earn?—It is much more than an operative earns.

5258. An operative, if he be a clever and industrious man, looks forward to becoming a middleman, I suppose?—Yes.

5259. Mr. *Ingham.*] Does the middleman who receives this sum provide the winding?—No, the winding is exclusive of that; he receives clear to himself, free from winding, 1*s.* 6*d.* per frame; but a clever person, in the sense you might understand it, would superintend a good many more than that number of frames, under proper circumstances.

5260. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Can you give the Committee any idea of what the workmen earn on an average in narrow frames?—It is very difficult to estimate the earnings of the workmen.

5261. Having been mixed up with the workmen for many years, can you not tell the Committee what are about their average earnings?—Considering all the circumstances, to the best of my belief, in the glove department, the average is from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week.

5262. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Net earnings?—No; I mean as a branch; they get from 10*s.* to 12*s.* in the glove branch; I believe that is the full extent, the extreme.

5263. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you mean they get that all the year round?—Yes.

5264. What I wish to understand is, whether that is for a season, or for all the

the year round?—It would not average that all the year round, taking the difference of the seasons.

5265. Is not the trade much more active at one season of the year than another?—It is.

5266. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You are speaking of the net system, and wide frames, are you not?—I mean taking all the frames together, the wide ones and the narrow ones; to the best of my belief, that would be about their earnings, from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week.

5267. That is in the glove branch?—In the glove branch.

5268. Have you any knowledge of what the earnings are in the wrought-hose branch?—It is horrible almost to contemplate; the haggard appearance of the men bespeaks the lowness of their wages.

5269. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you know anything of it practically?—Yes, I do.

5270. Will you give us the average earnings in the shirt branch?—In my opinion they are about 5*s.* or 6*s.*

5271. That is about the average?—Yes.

5272. Do you mean the same class of labourers?—I mean the wrought-hose hands; taking the average of their wages, they do not exceed 5*s.* or 6*s.*

5273. Is not a very large proportion of that class of hands composed of women, children, and old men?—Yes, there is a proportion of that class.

5274. Whereas in the glove branch the workmen are mostly composed of able-bodied men?—They are principally, but there is a difference there; there are some juveniles, and some females, but not so many in proportion as there are in the wrought-hose branch.

5275. Mr. *Biggs.*] When you said what the average was, you meant the average wages of able-bodied men, old men, and boys?—Yes.

5276. Will you be good enough to give us the average wages of able-bodied, tolerably ordinary skilled men, in the wrought-hose branch?—I should say that from 5*s.* to 6*s.* would be about the average in the year.

5277. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You said that from 5*s.* to 6*s.* was the average of the able-bodied men, old and young?—Yes; but I did not intend to convey that which you couple with it, because they have a preponderance of the old and young over and above what they have in the glove branch.

5278. Do you mean that the average of all three classes will be below 5*s.* or 6*s.*?—Yes, I believe so.

5279. So that the 5*s.* or 6*s.* represents the average wages of the able-bodied men?—That is my opinion.

5280. Do you know anything of the rents which are charged upon frames?—Yes.

5281. What is the rent charged for a narrow frame?—They vary in prices; for instance, for a narrow wrought-hose frame, the general charge is 1*s.*; for a narrow frame in the glove branch 1*s.* 6*d.* is charged; so that they differ widely.

5282. Sir *H. Halford.*] Will the same frames serve for either?—Yes, because they can make a fine wrought hose in it; it could be divided and used in the glove trade.

5283. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Having worked 20 years in the trade, you will probably be able to tell us whether there is much dissatisfaction among working men in the trade relative to the system of frame rents for the narrow frames?—I believe there is a great deal of dissatisfaction; the men have suffered very materially, and they believe that if there was an alteration made it would tend to benefit them, and that it would be a very great improvement to the trade generally. Such was their distress some nine or ten years ago, that the public opinion of Leicester was regularly roused upon the question; various meetings were held at that time, and a very strong expression of sympathy on the part of the public was then expressed towards the workmen. The subject being then taken up, there was a very strong belief on the part of the public, coupled with the men, that if something of this kind could be done, great relief would be obtained to the workmen and ratepayers generally; that was their impression.

5284. You speak of something being done; what do you refer to; what is that something which, if it were done, would, in your opinion, give relief to the workmen?—They considered that if things remained as they were the whole of the town would become positively pauperised; and to prevent that pauperism they thought that something that would do away with frame rents and charges would ultimately balance the thing. They considered that the men would improve

Mr. *W. Richmond.*

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improve both in their habits and morals; that there would be a better understanding between the employers and the men, and that there would be ultimately produced very great good in a pecuniary point of view.

5285. Do you consider that the abolition of frame rents would benefit the workmen?—Yes, coupled with the charges also; because in many cases the charges are more oppressive than even the rents themselves are.

5286. How would it be beneficial to the workmen?—Under bad circumstances the middleman, providing there were no frame rents and charges, would have to bear his loss with the workmen; while under the charges system the middleman claims his charges first, and it entirely depends on his disposition whether he makes any allowances in these cases or not; therefore the tendency, in my opinion, of the charges system is to fix the income of the middleman, while the workman has to bear the fluctuations of the trade.

5287. Do I understand you to say, then, that the object of the middleman is to employ more frames than are absolutely required for the execution of the work?—Yes; I believe the tendency of the charges system is to spread work, and the effect of spreading work, of course, is to bring more money into the pocket of the middleman.

5288. You say you believe that to be the tendency of the system, but do you believe it also to be the effect of it?—It is the fact that it is so.

5289. You know it to be so?—I do.

5290. Can you give us any instances in which you have seen, or heard, or know as a fact of rents having been taken where the men have been only half employed, or where they have been ill, or in such a case as that which you heard just now?—I have heard very many persons so express themselves, and I have to some small extent personally experienced it myself; but, fortunately for me, I have worked at the very best places in Leicester, and to the best dispositioned men, so that it has not been practised on me to the same extent as it has been practised on other people; therefore personally I have suffered the least under those circumstances; still many persons have suffered, to my knowledge.

5291. Not in consequence of their own idleness?—Not in consequence of their own idleness.

5292. What from, then?—Simply because they could not get work to do, though they were willing to perform the work.

5293. Do you mean to tell the Committee plainly, that in such cases when work was not given out the rent was charged?—I do mean to say that it is so.

5294. Is that a common practice?—Yes, it is a common practice.

5295. Is it a general practice?—Yes, it has been general.

5296. Does the same practice extend to persons holding frames when they are sick and unable to perform the work?—I believe it does, but I cannot say myself whether it is practised to the same extent when a person is sick as it is in the case of shortness of work; but I do know, with reference to myself, that when I have been sick I have had positively to pay rent and charges.

5297. Can you mention to the Committee any specific cases of that kind?—Mr. Jones, who is unfortunately dead, was an individual who paid it; I may say, as to myself, that I worked to Mr. Barker; he was the man I worked for; he was highly respected; it was customary to do these things at that time.

5298. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Mr. Barker, of Nottingham?—No, of Leicester; he was a very good master; I worked to him from the time he first commenced; he was a wrought-hose hand at first, and then he went into the glove department, and the charges of the glove department being much higher than what they were in the wrought-hose department the man felt as if he could not take the amount of charges that was allowed at the time, but gradually and slowly, but surely, it came ultimately to the point; the man was exceedingly pleasant and so forth, as far as that is concerned; but I will say, that while we worked with him we had plenty of employment a very great portion of the time, and consequently we had not to suffer, as we should have suffered under other circumstances.

5299. But part of the time you had not work?—In the instance I have mentioned I was ill, and though I was ill I had to pay my charges; that is what I mean; it was not from any bad feeling, but it was the general practice.

5300. Sir *H. Halford.*] Was Mr. Barker a middleman?—Yes.

5301. Sir

5301. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] How long ago is this?—Sixteen or 17 years ago.

5302. Does the same practice still continue?—I think it does; I think my own shopmates say the same.

5303. But do you know it as a fact?—I have given it as a fact in my own case.

5304. That is a long time ago?—Yes, it is a long time ago, but I have every reason to believe in the truth and veracity of my own shopmates, who say that it is taken still; in fact, there have been men who have been working with us, and who have been ill for a number of weeks, and when they have come to work they have said, "What a blessing it is that I am not under the charges system; I come to work free, and what I have to receive I have on Saturday night;" these are all their honest spontaneous expressions, and were the thing not practised as they state, they would not speak in that way.

5305. Do you know Mr. Buckby and Mr. Elliott?—Yes, I do.

5306. Are you a member of any committee with which they are connected?—I am not.

5307. You are entirely free?—Yes, I am.

5308. Have you ever, directly or indirectly, been paid for getting up evidence or for giving evidence?—No; on the other hand, if ever I should do it, it would be to assist those who are not so fortunate as myself.

5309. You have a pretty thorough knowledge of the state of your fellow-workmen about there, have you not?—Yes.

5310. Do you believe that a great many of their difficulties and disasters arise from the exaction of excessive frame rents and charges?—I do.

5311. That is your opinion?—That is my opinion.

5312. And are you of opinion that the net system, under which you have been working for nine years, would improve the condition of the operatives?—I believe it would; its tendency would be to improve their condition.

5313. Do you speak your own sentiments, and also those of all your fellow-workmen, when you say that that system is found to give satisfaction?—Yes, they are satisfied with it.

5314. That is, they are satisfied with the system adopted by Messrs. Preston & Company?—Yes.

5315. Are Messrs. Preston & Company satisfied themselves, do you know, as to the state of their trade as compared with others?—From having a personal knowledge of and acquaintance with Mr. Preston, as far as conversation is concerned, I know he expresses himself fully and entirely satisfied with what he has done, and he hopes to continue, and trusts that others will follow his example; he believes that if it was really put into practice, and to become general, those who oppose the thing now would be as much opposed to have it altered and to go back to charges as they are now opposed to the system of net wages, for it causes a kindly feeling between the employers and the employed, and promotes a good understanding between them; if anything is wrong the thing is properly set right; the material is at hand; there is no waiting when there is work to perform; there is everything arranged for a man to work according to his ability; he has the fullest confidence that he can do so, and he can meet his employer with the greatest confidence; but on the other hand, with the charges system it is the opposite; a man, whatever may be his ability to perform the work, cannot get it, and the more he asks for it the more the employer feels hurt, and consequently often reflects upon the men for so doing.

5316. How many men are so employed by Messrs. Preston?—Between 50 and 60.

5317. But that is in the glove branch, I think?—Yes, he has some looms there, but they are all worked upon the same principle.

5318. Do you think it practicable and easy to be carried out to work the narrow frame upon the same system of net wages?—Just so; I see no difficulty in it.

5319. Sir *H. Halford.*] In the houses of the workmen?—In the houses of the workmen; I see no difficulty or disarrangement of domestic affairs; it is simple and easy to carry out, and it is perfectly practicable without moving even one frame.

5320. That is, by saying "Our rate of payment is so much per dozen"?—Yes.

5321. That is all that would be required?—Yes.

Mr. *W. Richmond.*

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5322. Do you see any difficulty that would arise from paying a certain price per dozen, whether to a quick hand or to a slow hand, or do you see any injury that would arise from it?—If anything should be telling, it is, they say, telling on one's self. I was not displeased, because I considered all the circumstances, and balanced the thing up, as I considered, in my own mind pretty accurately, and I thought I was on the safest side, the best side, and really, as poor Jones the poet, if you will excuse me, said, a heavenly one; for in his comparison he said, one was below and the other was above; and I think in sentiment, feeling, kindness, charity, and everything that characterises man, it has its salutary effect; and I appeal to the honourable Member present, who knows Leicester, whether I am not right when I assert that it is positively a fact, that the men working there are always recognised as individuals paying due respect to employers and to every one else, who stand equally and are willing to be a parallel to any.

5323. You are speaking of your own shopmates?—Yes.

5324. What I wished especially to ask you was, whether you saw that any individual wrong would be done by giving to a quick workman the same rate per dozen as to a slow workman?—No; the quick workmen took it upon this principle, that they had a feeling for their fellow-workmen, and were willing to make such contracts as should meet all cases; and the quick hands gave up, as it was termed, taking the average, and they considered themselves far better off as a whole during the whole year by adopting that system than by carrying out the system of frame rents and charges.

5325. I understand you to say, the quick hands in your employ preferred receiving a little less than probably they could earn if they were put to full work, in order to equalise the amount that would be paid to hands somewhat slower than themselves?—Just so.

5326. You say you think this system might also be carried out in the wrought-hose narrow frame; but the wrought-hose narrow frames, you must bear in mind, are worked by children and women; and children of 10 or 12 years of age can probably make as good a stocking as a man?—I much doubt that.

5327. However, it has been so stated here?—I doubt it, for many practical reasons, though I should say that with the care and attention that other parties might have over a youth, he might produce such work as would be possibly acceptable to the manufacturer; but for such an individual to have a frame on his own account, and to make the work, I dispute the fact that he could produce a quality of work which would be acceptable to the manufacturer.

5328. In the wrought-hose branch narrow frames one man can make about from three to four dozen, at 4 *s.* a dozen, can he not?—He will have to work to do that, I am certain; I am sure he would have to work till the House of Commons hours, very late; it might be done in some odd cases; I know what wrought work is; I have been a wrought-hose hand myself.

5329. A quick, clever man, will make three dozen in the course of the week, will he not?—Yes.

5330. At 4 *s.*?—I wish the time were stated that it would take him to make them, however quick he might be.

5331. A slower hand would make two dozen, which would be 8 *s.*?—Yes.

5332. And a still slower hand would make one dozen?—Yes.

5333. Which would be 4 *s.*?—Yes.

5334. You have told us that there is no difficulty in so arranging it as that one price should be paid per dozen; now the Committee want to know how you would arrange with those three hands to pay one price per dozen?—I have stated before that we entered into fresh contracts with our employer, and we allowed 2½*d.* out of every 10½*d.* to be taken off the price of all kinds of gloves; for instance, the gloves for which I should have taken 1 *s.* 9*d.* under the charges system, I should have 1 *s.* 4*d.* for under the net system.

5335. What I still want to know is, what you give to the man who makes three dozen, and earns 12 *s.* at 4 *s.* a dozen; he is working, you say, very hard?—Yes, he is.

5336. Would you give him 4 *s.* a dozen, and the second man 4 *s.* a dozen, and the third man 4 *s.* a dozen, or how would you average it?—I should take the average on the middle one, and the man who earns the 12 *s.* would have an opportunity to continue to la bour, because his employer would have an equal desire to employ that man; it would be to his advantage to employ him instead of

of preventing him doing the amount of work, because it is the quantity that he individual would receive his profits from, and therefore the net system would enable each of these individuals, according to his ability, to get what he could, while under the charges system the wages do not depend on the ability of the workman, but on what the middleman is enabled to give him in point of work, agreeable to his own interest.

5337. Do I understand you to say that you would deduct 4 *s.* per week from the man who was able to make 12 *s.*?—No, they would agree at so much in the shilling; that is what I mean; what I meant by what I said, was this; supposing in these three cases there is a difficulty which presents itself to the mind, that difficulty we solved ourselves by allowing so much in the shilling; we did not take into account how it would affect individuals, but viewing the thing as a whole, the quicker hands at that time considered that it was a disadvantage for the weak, but that taken as a whole, it was a very great advantage; consequently they accepted it with pleasure, seeing no other way open of agreeing to carry out the principle of the net system, and consequently so much in the shilling was allowed, irrespective as to what one can get, or what the lowest gets.

5338. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that, in point of fact, your 2½ *d.* in the shilling represented the frame rent and charges?—Just so.

5339. Are you quite correct as to the 2½ *d.* in the 10½ *d.*?—It is so near that I could not state it otherwise; I have given it simply in a particular case, and in other cases it is rather different.

5340. Do you know Samuel Brown, who works at Preston & Company's?—Yes.

5341. How do you explain his statement, in answer to Question No. 4813, as to how he effected the change from the charges system to the net; he says, "I believe 4 *d.* in the shilling was taken from the gross warehouse price; what the middleman would charge to the hosier previously was 4 *d.* in the shilling; supposing a dozen of gloves were 3 *s.* before, between the manufacturer and the middlemen, when there was a readjustment of prices, that would be 2 *s.* direct to the workman"?—Taking the glove branch, in the first place there is 4½ *d.* taken off for stitching; therefore the price given to the workman would be 2 *s.* 7½ *d.*; the price for those gloves between the hander and the fingerer would be 2 *s.* 7½ *d.*, and 1½ *d.* in the shilling will be allowed for stitching, which makes, to come off from the total price of the glove, 4 *d.* in the shilling; 2½ *d.* the workman, and 1½ *d.* for the stitching.

5342. Lord *J. Manners.*] How do you get to your 2½ *d.* in the 10½ *d.*?—That is 2½ *d.* in the 10½ *d.*, first taking off the stitching; virtually the 3 *s.* glove to the workman is 2 *s.* 7½ *d.*

5343. Mr. *Cheetham.*] There is a difference in the mode of putting it by you and Mr. Brown; he included the stitching?—Yes.

5344. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Do you know anything of the workmen in the suburbs of Leicester?—I know some of them, but my knowledge of them is not extensive in the suburbs.

5345. Have you ever worked as a middleman?—I did for a short period.

5346. Will you tell us what your experience of it was?—It certainly was very short and painful to me; in fact, I did not like the system adopted. My brother had a certain number of frames which were his own property, and I had those frames with some hosiers; and having worked those frames to a hosier for some short time, he said to me, "I cannot find you any more work." Well, I was not very pressing, thinking it was entirely because there was no demand, or that there was not a sufficient demand, and consequently my frames, being what they call independent, I at once went about my business. Afterwards, when I was taking up some work, he said, "Well, how are you going on for work?" I said, "I am still now." "Well, I cannot find you any more unless (he said) you pay me something in the shape of poundage, or pay me rent."

5347. Sir *H. Halford.*] For your own frames?—For my brother's frames, frames that I held of him; "Well," I said, "I cannot consent to that; having to pay rent myself, I cannot consent to it;" and the consequence was that I had no work; I declined it; I would never work to him any more; I gave up the frames, and from that period to the present I have worked with my present employers.

5348. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] As a middleman, did you take rent when you had not

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not full work to give out?—My conscience would not allow me to do it then; I do not know how I should have been if I had been an old hand; I do not wish to take more merit to myself than others, but at the time I had them (and it was but a short time), if I failed to have sufficient work I took off from the rent what I considered sufficient, according to the time that the men had not the work to perform.

5349. Then in consequence of your refusing to take rent when there was no work you were obliged to give up the frames?—I was; I might have done it in other forms.

5350. Mr. *Ingham.*] I thought you gave up work in consequence of refusing to pay rent to a man whose frames you did not use?—I saw the system he would adopt, and consequently I gave it up altogether, because he wished me to pay frame rent or poundage for frames that were not his property.

5351. And you gave it up in consequence?—Yes.

5352. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Then you do not concur in the opinions that have been given before this Committee that frame rents are not taken when full work is not given out?—I believe that frame rents are taken by the middlemen; I do not know whether the employer charges them or not; I cannot say how that is; but I believe they are taken by the middlemen.

5353. Do you think they are taken by the middlemen?—I do not know that they are by all middlemen.

5354. But do you know them to be taken by many middlemen?—I have heard of the fact of its being so, and I know it has been so in my own case, but not to the same extent as it has been with others.

5355. Do you know the sentiments of your fellow-workmen in Leicester pretty generally?—I believe I do.

5356. What is your opinion as to the extent of complaint that there is upon this subject; does it extend generally to the workmen?—It does; it has been a matter of long discussion and very great anxiety; the question is often asked when they meet each other, "Will this Session pass over without something decisive?"

5357. You have heard something said here about Mr. Buckby and Mr. Elliott; do you know how those men are paid by their fellow-workmen?—I do not think they are paid very liberally; whatever they have I think they expend plenty of time for.

5358. Do they work at their trade themselves?—I believe they do.

5359. Do they work hard for their living?—I believe they do.

5360. Then it is a small sum only that they get from their fellow-workmen for their agitation?—I believe it is very small.

5361. Do you think that agitation would at all exist without the absolute evil itself existing?—I do not think that it would.

5362. Have you sufficient confidence in the workmen about you to believe that they would not agitate unless a real grievance existed?—I do not believe that they would pay their money without a knowledge that it was paid for some good purpose.

5363. And you do not believe that the workmen would be easily misled upon this subject?—I do not believe that they would be; I would not myself; and as far as I am concerned, I would induce others to act like me.

5364. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think that if the wages were good the workmen would care how they were paid them?—Yes, I do; I believe that the sufferings the workmen have experienced in reference to the charges system are such, generally speaking, that they feel most repugnant to the system of frame rents and charges; and knowing there are others who do not act upon the principle, that seems to carry conviction to their minds, and they feel as if under any circumstances they would prefer to have their money clear rather than have anything deducted in the shape of rent and charges.

5365. Do they not attribute the lowness of their wages to the existence of rent and charges?—I believe they attribute it to some extent to that, and they think that very great evil arises from the practice of making deductions from their wages.

5366. Do you mean to say that they attribute the lowness of their wages to the stoppage system?—Not exactly.

5367. To what do they attribute the lowness of their wages?—They believe, so far as the lowness of their wages is concerned, that the charges system has induced

induced a great quantity of machinery to be brought into the market when the market does not call for it; that is what they believe, and that that has tended to reduce their wages, inasmuch as they have had to pay for that machinery when it has not been wanted.

5368. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Has the effect of the introduction of the charges system, and the introduction of an increased quantity of machinery, been to employ workmen and children to a greater extent than is required?—That is my impression.

5369. Do you believe it frequently happens that no more employment is given to a whole family, where there are two or three frames, than could be executed by the head of the family himself, and that that is done for the purpose of obtaining frame rent?—In some particular cases it might be so; it might be that in some extreme case one man might do the work that was allowed for three; but I have known cases personally in which, where families have been at work, and a certain amount of work has been given out to them, instead of the whole of them being employed, part of them only have been employed, and the work has been done by that part, while the other part has gone out to seek employment elsewhere.

5370. Would it not, in your opinion, be very much better, that when work is slack or when there is little employment, a portion of the labour should be employed in other things rather than that the work should be spread over a large number of persons?—I believe it would be very desirable for their own individual comfort that it should be so; I believe it would ultimately give to many heads of families the means of putting their children to other trades, while now they are everlastingly clinging together on this principle. I think also that the principle of net wages would induce parties having families to seek out other occupations for their children prior to their arriving at a certain age, while under the principle of frame rents and charges they are completely dull and apathetic.

5371. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is not the fact of the low earnings of these wrought-hose hands a sufficient inducement to them now to seek other employment for their children?—They are almost heartbroken; they have no mind to look at things as other persons would.

5372. If there were other employment would they not look to that, do you think?—In many cases they have not even attire sufficiently respectable to enable them to go to other trades, they are so reduced.

5373. Sir *H. Halford.*] They are in so depressed a condition, that they are incapable of finding or even seeking any other occupation?—Yes; but there have been benevolent individuals who have done something for them occasionally.

5374. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are we to understand the spreading-out system is continuous throughout the year; that is to say, is there at all times in the wrought-hose trade employment for all the hands engaged in it?—I believe there is a time when there is plenty of employment.

5375. During each year?—That I cannot say; I do not think there has been this year; there may be some portion of the year.

5376. A time when all the hands, old, young, and able-bodied, are employed?—It is quite possible to be so.

5377. Then what is the inducement for the master to spread the work in the way in which you say he does?—The inducement is simply this, that if an individual gets a few pounds together, he at once lays it out in a frame, and that brings him in not only the frame rent, but the charges.

5378. Is not that the exact time when he is wanting a less quantity of goods than he wants in a busy time?—It is a matter of indifference to him whether it is a good time or a bad time, so long as he can get hold of the frame.

5379. Has he not to sell the goods produced by the frame?—No; you are talking of the manufacturer, and I am talking of the employer or middleman.

5380. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not the case that the middleman has often no interest in the sale of the goods?—Yes.

5381. His profit is entirely derived from the rent and charges, independently of the sale of the goods?—Yes.

5382. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Who is to sell these goods?—The manufacturer.

5383. And the middleman works for the manufacturer?—Yes.

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5384. Is not the time when he so stints the work the time when he is wanting the fewest goods made?—Granted.

5385. Then the pressure upon him is owing to the want of demand for his goods; suppose him to be on the net system, and the goods not to be wanted, and suppose the labourer wants to make the goods, would not the labourer, in order to obtain the order to make the goods, reduce the price of his labour?—He might do so.

5386. Is not that tantamount to taking it in the shape of rent?—No.

5387. Why not?—Because, as I have said before, the middleman claims the first money earned, and therefore it entirely depends upon the middleman what amount of work he will give out beyond the rent; if his charges are 3*s.*, and he has a mind to give him 4*s.* or 4*s.* 6*d.*, he takes the 3*s.* if he thinks proper, and the man cannot help himself, and therefore if the middleman were to offer him the same amount of reduction that he has taken off by way of rent and charges, he would consider himself insulted, and perhaps never work to the man any more.

5388. Take a shop upon the net system, and suppose there comes a bad trade, and the middleman enters the shop and says, "I have work for only half of you," would the workmen be better pleased if he should turn half of them into the street, than if he were to say, "I will distribute this work among you all"?—Suppose it was distributed, the men would not have the full charges to pay; they would have what they earned.

5389. Take the case the other way; suppose the middleman were to say, "I have only work for half of you, and I will turn the other half into the street;" would not the men say "No, master; we will take a less price upon the net system if you will distribute the work among us;" would not that be the natural state of things resulting from the want of demand for labour? You are telling us that the middleman has power to do as he likes in a bad state of trade, and that he exercises that power; would he not be able under a net system to exercise it in the mode I have suggested?—A workman feels somewhat bound to pay respect to the other portion of the workmen, and if he were to offer to make any reduction there would be a meeting of the whole of the men, and by their decision so they would abide.

5390. Why cannot there be some understanding between the men with regard to this spreading-out system?—Because, as to that, the men have not the same power.

5391. Does not the deduction, whether it be in the shape of rent or other charges, ultimately resolve itself into the reduction of wages paid to the workmen?—Yes, but the workman does not have three times the quantity taken off his work; that is to say, he is not reduced 2*s.* in the dozen, when 5*d.* or 10*d.* ought to be an equivalent for the time he works his frame.

5392. But you tell me that if under the net system the middlemen were to attempt to alter the scale of wages the men would resist it; why do they not resist it when he attempts to obtain the same rent by the roundabout system of rent and charges?—Because the middleman does not tell them at the commencement of the week that he only intends to find a certain amount of work for them; he will give them a certain amount of work at first, and the men expect to continue upon that work, but ultimately they find out their mistake, and the middlemen, when they have got their charges, are satisfied.

5393. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean to tell us that the men, when they take a frame, expect to have full work?—Yes, that is their intention; they expect such a thing.

5394. The practice, you say, is to give them half work and to charge them full rent?—I do not say it is so every week; that is not my idea; but I say the tendency of the charges system leads to that.

5395. We do not want you to tell us what the tendency of the system is; we want you to tell us what the actual fact is, if you please?—Then I say that in a very great many cases such is the case.

5396. You have made two irreconcilable statements; you tell me that men enter into these contracts with their eyes shut, and that they expect to have a full allowance of work as a matter of course; you say they are fraudulently deprived of this work; and then, on the other hand, you tell us that the practice of the trade is almost universal to stint and charge full rent; how are those two statements to be reconciled?—When I say simply that the men expect full work,

work, they go upon the principle that as they pay full charges they have a right to expect full work; that is the idea I intended to convey.

5397. When these men take a frame, have they such a reasonable expectation that they will have full work as to make it a hardship and a fraud if they are deprived of work for part of the week, and yet be compelled to pay rent for the whole week?—They look upon that case in this way, that they pay a full rent and ought to be entitled to the full use of their frames for the whole of the week; and if they do not get that, and the full charges are taken, they consider it a fraud.

6398. When you say they ought to be entitled, you mean it would be much better for them that they should be entitled; but when a man takes a frame, is there any understanding, direct or indirect, that he is to have full work?—No, I do not know that there is.

5399. Then how could there be any fraud in it; a working man living in Leicester must know pretty well the facts of the case; he must know that he takes the frame subject to the contingency of not having full employment for it?—Of course.

5400. Then how can you call it fraud if he is subject to that contingency?—There is an impression upon his mind that he has a right to the work, or that, as he pays for the six days' charges, he should have six days' work.

5401. If a man takes a frame with a full understanding that he is to have work to employ it for six days, and he is deprived of a portion of that work, that, no doubt, is an injustice and a fraud; but if he takes it with no such understanding, and that is the question that I wish to ask you, does he take it with a distinct understanding that he is to have full employment the whole week or not; how is that?—Of course he takes it with that understanding, but then he knows the system which operates; although the man takes it with that understanding, he knows for all that that they take full charges when only partial work is given out.

5402. Where is the understanding?—Because it has been done before.

5403. Does he enter into this agreement with a knowledge of what takes place?—Questions are not put to an employer in that form; what is said is, "You have a frame to let; what are the charges?" "So much per week;" then he ascertains the amount of work that is generally given out; that is the only thing that is done; he finds that it would be better to adopt that system than to have a fresh one.

5404. *Chairman.*] Is he any party to the contract; has not the master the option of giving him work as he pleases, without acquiescence on the part of the man?—The workman has no power to force the master to give him work.

5405. Is he not obliged to be content with any amount of work he may receive?—Yes.

5406. Sir *H. Halford.*] You think, do you not, that when a man receives only half work, and is made to pay full rent and charges, there is an offence committed against natural justice?—I do. I think that when I pay six days' charges it is an injustice to me not to be allowed to work the six days.

5407. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Not at all; you hire a frame for a week, and you agree to pay a shilling; you may make a bad bargain, but you agree to pay a shilling for the rent of the frame for a week, but the party from whom you take it does not engage to employ you the whole week; you leave that an open question; I want you to show me where is the offence against natural justice?—There is an understanding that a man who pays six days' charges should have six days' work.

5408. You say there is an understanding; what do you mean by an understanding?—I mean simply this, that between me and the employer, I do not dictate to that employer and say, "I demand for my week's work six or seven dozen" and so forth, but that I expect to do a certain amount of work equivalent to make me comfortable.

5409. I thought you said just now, that a man going to a particular shop inquired what amount of work was given out?—That is from the men working, not from the master.

5410. He finds out whether they give out three days or two days' work, does he not?—Yes.

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5411. Is it not his business to find out what is the general average of work that is given out?—It is.

5412. He goes and engages himself to that shop, and agrees to pay the rent of that frame in all cases?—Yes.

5413. And trusts to his own sagacity and to the information which he receives from the workmen as to the amount of work; we will say three days' work is given out?—Yes.

5414. If a man who consents to pay A. B. a shilling a week for a frame, finds out afterwards that only three days' work is given out generally in the course of the week, and if he enters into that contract voluntarily, where is the natural injustice of it?—It is his necessity that induces him to comply under those circumstances.

5415. *Chairman.*] Then he is forced by necessity to make an unjust bargain?—Yes.

5416. Sir *H. Halford.*] I want you to suppose the case of a man hiring a frame paying full rent for it and receiving only half work, would that man be at liberty to take work from another quarter?—No, he would not.

5417. Mr. *Gardner.*] Because that is part of his agreement, I suppose?—No, there is nothing said on the subject.

5418. What penalty would be exacted from a man who did it?—I suppose the man would lose his frame if it was known by his employer that he did so.

5419. It can hardly be said to be a hardship to lose a frame there is so little use for?—It might be a hardship to those individuals who are in necessity, but it would not be a hardship to those above necessity.

5420. Is it not the fact that these people are poor, and are compelled to submit to such terms as are imposed upon them?—Yes.

5421. I understood you to say, in reply to a question put to you by an honourable Member, that if a direct reduction of wages on the net system were attempted, the probability is that the men would feel insulted and would turn away?—Yes, but when I said they would be insulted I did not mean to use that word in an offensive sense; I meant, that if they knew the amount of direct deduction, I believe it would cause the men to resist, and that they would not work.

5422. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are you speaking of your own glove trade?—Yes, I am.

5423. Do you know from your practical knowledge whether the wrought-hose men could take that independent stand?—There you pose me; you have been principally on the wrought-hose hands, and I have told you I have been for 23 years a glove hand, and my experience as to wrought hose is not so great as it has been with regard to glove hands; and therefore, associating their ideas and circumstances with my own, and those by whom I am surrounded, I cannot answer to the same extent.

5424. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] You have been asked as to the probability of men taking frames with a certain knowledge that they will have a very small quantity of work. I think you have said that many of the men in the wrought-hose branch, working in narrow frames, earn from five to six shillings a week, or four to five shillings. Do any of those men, in your opinion, go to a middleman and ask for a frame for which they are to pay a shilling a week rent, under the idea that they are only to have one or two or three days' work in the course of the week?—No.

5425. Is it not their impression when they take a frame that they will have work given out to them?—Yes, that is their impression.

5426. Mr. *Gardner.*] You say it is the practice in the trade, and the rule, as I understand you, always to give short work in bad times?—Yes.

5427. Then how can you tell us in the same breath that the hands who must be acquainted with the practice, and who are surrounded by parties who have been the victims of it, can be under an impression, when they agree to pay a rent of a shilling a week, that they are to have full work given out to them?—They do have full work at times, but there are seasons when they have only half work and pay the full rent.

5428. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] It is their necessity and not their will that compels them to submit to the exaction?—Yes.

5429. Mr.

5429. Mr. *Gardner.*] I want to ask whether, when you went to a shop, knowing the state of trade and the character of the shop, and hearing what the other hands said, you were not able to form a very good idea what quantity of work you would have?—I should have to form my idea from what I heard from the workmen. The master would think it impertinent in me if I were to ask him how much work I should have.

5430. It is not the custom of the trade to ask such questions?—No.

5431. Mr. *Mundy.*] Does a man know at the beginning of the week how much work he is likely to have in the course of the week?—No.

5432. Is not that one of the grievances of which the workmen complain?—Yes; if they earn 1*s.* they want to have it.

5433. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you prefer the net wages system to the system of rent and charges?—I do.

5434. Why?—Because if I earn 1*s.* I have it, and if I earn 3*s.* 7*d.*, or any other sum, I have it.

5435. Are your wages now more or less than they were under the old system, or are they the same?—I believe that taken as a whole they are more.

5436. You have said that you think the net system could be extended to the country?—I do.

5437. You are speaking now with reference to narrow frames in the wrought-hose branch?—Yes.

5438. You are aware, of course, that middlemen are employed by most of the manufacturers?—Yes.

5439. And I suppose you are of opinion that it is better for working men to have their affairs managed by middlemen than to manage them themselves on their own individual account?—I am willing to admit that to be the case under certain conditions.

5440. You propose to abolish charges as well as rent?—Yes.

5441. How would you propose that a middleman should be paid for his services?—By taking off so much from the gross amount.

5442. How do you explain that?—It might be done by means of fresh contracts, in the same way as contracts were entered into between us and our employers. We allowed so much in the shilling, and a middleman might be allowed so much in the shilling as would be equivalent to his charges.

5443. The effect of that would be, would it not, that the middleman would receive one price at the warehouse, and would give a smaller price to the journeymen?—Yes; that is the fact.

5444. It would, therefore, create two prices?—Yes, there are two prices now.

5445. Do you think that such a system would give satisfaction?—I do.

5446. Are you aware that the honourable Baronet (Sir Henry Halford) brought in a Bill some time ago, called the Ticket Act, the object of which was to redress that supposed grievance?—There would not be two prices to the workmen; whatever a workman earned, he would have the work on the system of tickets now.

5447. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you use tickets now?—Yes; and I am authorised by Mr Brown, as this question was brought up, to read this as evidence; he says, "We have carried out the ticket system for nine years, and like the plan much. It tends very much to prevent disputes between masters and men."

5448. Are your tickets exactly in conformity with the Act of Parliament?—Yes, in exact conformity with it; the gauge, the material, the price, the length, and all other particulars are given exactly in conformity with the Ticket Act.

5449. And you do not find it attended with any serious inconvenience?—We do not. Mr. Brown says, he finds the plan to act well.

5450. Mr. *Biggs.*] I was asking you how you would pay the middleman, and I think you admit that he must be paid by a reduction of wages?—Yes, by a deduction from the gross price received from the warehouse.

5451. That is to say, there would be two prices, the warehouse price and the price paid by the middleman?—There are two prices now in many cases.

5452. Would not that give rise to dissatisfaction and suspicion?—I cannot see why it should.

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5453. Was not one reason which was assigned by the honourable Baronet, as showing the necessity for the Ticket Act, that the workmen did not know the warehouse price; that the manufacturers gave out work at one price, and the middlemen at another?—Yes, but they had the idea associated with that, that they would be paid net wages.

5454. If you dispense, then, with the charges of the middleman, you admit that he must be paid by means of a reduction of the wages paid to the journeyman?—Just so.

5455. *Chairman.*] But in that case would not the middleman be paid by the manufacturer instead of by the workman?—He might be. I see no reason why he should not be paid by the manufacturer as well as by the workman.

5456. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If so, would not that lead to an alteration in the list price?—It would, provided he had net.

5457. Does the change by Act of Parliament which you contemplate resolve itself into anything beyond removing a ground of complaint of grievance?—I believe it would remove the grievance the workmen complain of.

5458. Would it, at the same time, raise the wages of the workmen?—I believe it would tend that way.

5459. How do you explain that; would it, in your opinion, tend that way by giving them more continuous employment?—I cannot say. I believe it would tend to this, that whatever they got they would receive; if they earned 1 *s.* they would get it, and their not getting it is just where the evil lies.

5460. Sir *H. Halford.*] Would it not so tend by relieving them from exaggerated deductions?—Yes; if there is 1 *d.*, 1½ *d.*, 2 *d.*, or 3 *d.* in the shilling taken off, then if a man only earns 1 *s.* he would have only 2 *d.*, if that was the sum, deducted; if a man earns 5 *s.* it would be 10 *d.*; a man must do 5 *s.* worth of work before it would come to 10 *d.*

5461. The charges which are at present made are, in your opinion, excessive with reference to the amount of work done?—Yes.

5462. Mr. *Biggs.*] You would legislate to abolish frame rents?—I would abolish them; that is all I want to interfere with. All that the workmen seek to interfere with is simply that they should receive their money in full; that other people might let their frames, but that the workmen should not pay for it as rent; and that whatever they earn they should be paid in full.

5463. Is not your wish to abolish frame rents and charges?—No; all I require is that whatever I earn I should have in full.

5464. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In other words, what you would propose is, to convert the gross price of 4 *s.* into 3 *s.* 8 *d.*, or 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, allowing for the deductions which are now made under the title of frame rents and other charges?—Yes.

5465. As regards the question of frame rents and charges, the position of the workmen at the net price would be the same as it was at the gross price?—Admitting that to be the case, how would it be when the men had not half work?

5466. In a state of full employment the position of the men, as regards the price per dozen, would be the same under the net system as under the gross system, would it not?—No; it would not be the same.

5467. Supposing the gross price to be 4 *s.* per dozen for wrought hose, and the rent 4 *d.*, if you gave the workman 3 *s.* 8 *d.* net that would be equivalent to paying him 4 *s.* per dozen gross, and charging him 1 *s.* a week rent, would it not?—Yes.

5468. If in the wrought-hose branch a man does three dozen a week, and he pays 1 *s.* a week rent, that is equivalent to 4 *d.* per dozen?—Yes.

5469. If the workman was receiving 4 *s.* a dozen gross, he would then receive 3 *s.* 8 *d.* net?—Yes.

5470. His position, as regards the remuneration he would receive for his labour, would be the same under one system as under the other, would it not?—If it was always at that point.

5471. The evils which you point out of spreading work, and exacting full rent for half work, arise when there is a bad trade?—Yes; and that induces a surplus of machinery, which frequently causes a reduction.

5472. So that the evils you point out are the result of a bad trade?—Yes; I believe that they tend to cause a surplus in the market.

5473. Over that bad state of trade the employer has no control whatever, has he?—The manufacturer himself has not.

5474. He is subject to the same principle as the workman is subject to, namely, the liability to good or bad trade?—As far as that is concerned, he is.

5475. Your proposed legislation would in no way affect the question of finding abundant employment for the labourers?—I believe it would find them employment, for I believe it would regulate to a great extent the amount of machinery required.

5476. How would it regulate it?—If I, as a middleman, had 20 frames, and if, as those frames wore out, I did not feel myself at liberty to have them renewed, as 16 could do the same amount of work as 20 did, and as the 16 would receive for doing that amount of work the same as the 20, the 16 would share the benefits which would be given to the other four, and consequently the 16 would be improved in their condition.

5477. Mr. *Ingham.*] What, in that case, would become of the four?—In my opinion it would, in the first place, prevent individuals having that easy access to the trade that they have now under the charges system.

5478. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would you advocate legislation, and would you think it the duty of Parliament to legislate against there being easy access to the trade?—No; but I am showing that the charges system induces middlemen to learn any persons who may think proper to offer themselves, to the injury of others.

5479. But it only induces them to do this, you say, in a flat state of trade; they cannot do it when there is abundant employment?—Then of course it is their interest to give work out.

5480. In a bad state of trade they resort to the practices of which you complain?—Yes; under the net system, in a bad state of trade, the advantage is to the workmen, because the burthen is borne equally by the employer and the employed.

5481. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is not the tendency of the present system in a bad state of trade to maintain profits at the expense of wages?—I believe that to be the tendency of it.

5482. That is, the present system enables the owner of frames to obtain his profit upon those frames, while wages are indefinitely lowered?—It has that tendency, in my opinion.

5483. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you consider that the profits which are made in the hosiery trade are higher than those which are made in other branches of business?—I cannot say that.

5484. What do you think?—Looking around me, when I take a walk I see some very pleasant places, which induce me to think that there must be pretty good profits made in the trade, or there would not be such fine mansions erected by gentlemen engaged in it.

5485. In your opinion, are the profits which are made in the hosiery business higher than the profits which are made in other branches of trade?—I can only speak with reference to those with whom I come in contact, who say that the hosiers can get on better than they can, and consequently I infer that their profits are better.

5486. With whom do you make the comparison?—Drapers.

5487. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If the profits made in the hosiery trade are so great as you suppose, how do you reconcile that with the small amount of remuneration paid to the workman for his labour in the wrought-hose branch?—I cannot say. In my opinion, according to the position of the workmen, and according to their necessities, so they are; they are compelled to work.

5488. You have been speaking about the profits of the employers. If there is a large profit to be made in any trade, do not all employers seek to extend their business?—Yes.

5489. How do you reconcile that with the non-employment of labour in the wrought-hose branch?—Because the middleman has so much in the shape of charges, that he may increase his independent machinery over and above the power that the manufacturer has a demand for.

5490. Does he increase the quantity of his machinery when he has not work to give out?—Of course he will increase it; it is to his interest to do so.

5491. Without having work to employ it?—He supposes that he will have work.

Mr. *W. Richmond.*

12 June 1855.

5492. You have been telling me that there is a considerable portion of the year during which he has not work?—Not the full amount of work; that is what I say. You asked me whether, to the best of my knowledge, there was full work all the year round, and I said I thought not, though there might be in some cases.

5493. Sir *H. Halford.*] In your opinion, are there more or fewer middlemen engaged in the trade than are necessary for the conduct of it?—There are more, I believe.

5494. And is not the tendency of the means of obtaining these profits to introduce into the trade more receivers of profit than are necessary to carry it on?—Yes.

5495. And in that way a greater proportion of the proceeds of the manufacture goes to profits and less to wages than is consistent with a sound state of things?—The middleman is the person the workman has to do with.

5496. But the middleman is a receiver of profits?—Yes; there is more goes in the shape of profits than is necessary and less to wages.

5497. Mr. *Biggs.*] You would prefer the net system, you say, in the wrought-hose frame?—I prefer the net system for the wrought hose, judging from my own case.

5498. The adoption of the net system of course implies the doing away with the rent and charges system?—It would imply the doing away with rent, that is, a workman would not pay in the shape of rent for frames he did not use; not that if I held 20 frames of my own as my private property I might not let them to other persons; I should be free to let those frames to any person who wanted them; all that we, as workmen, require is, that we shall be paid our wages in full according to the wages we agree for.

5499. Your being paid net wages of course implies that you supersede the present mode of paying rent and charges; will you show me how it would be the interest of any manufacturer without rent to provide a workman with any frame at all?—I understand that you adopt the very system yourself; that you take poundage instead of rent.

5500. That is not an answer to my question?—Then I would say this, that you know the price of the work that is now given out, and you charge so much for the frame, and therefore you could take an equivalent from the full price to answer the end of the frame rent.

5501. Doing away with frame rent would, in point of fact, reduce wages, would it not?—No, the men would have as much to take at the end of the week, and more in many cases.

5502. It would reduce their gross wages, would it not?—Yes, but they would have it in the net.

5503. How do you show that a workman would have more?—I find with reference to myself that I improve upon the net system, and that I am better off than I was under the charges system, and taking the year round, I find I am a better man through it. I have abundant work given to me as long as it is possible for the employers to give it; I have the best machinery to perform the work, and consequently I have facilities which I should not have under the charges system.

5504. Mr. *Gardner.*] When you were working under the charges system, were you employed by the same gentlemen?—I was.

5505. Do you mean to say that they pay you more wages now under the net system than they paid you formerly?—Yes, for this reason; we have an improved class of machinery.

5506. *Chairman.*] Would not an operative employed upon the net system enter upon his work with more spirit and energy than he would if he were employed upon the stoppage system?—He would, indeed.

5507. Independently of the difference in wages, would he not enter with more energy and spirit, and be more happy than he would under the other system?—Certainly. I endeavoured to illustrate that by giving Mr. Jones's elucidation of the two systems.

5508. Mr. *Gardner.*] The reason why you get more wages with Mr. Preston under the net system than you formerly got under the charges system is, as I understand

understand, because you have better machinery, and not because you are paid in a different way?—I mean this; that it is not the interest of Mr. Preston to have a bad class of machinery, and to have it worked down so low that it takes a man an hour or two in the day to keep it in order, but to have the machinery kept in order, and when it wants doing, to have it done.

5509. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is not one consequence of the system of frame rents, that there is a great deal of bad machinery employed in the trade?—Yes.

5510. You have spoken of Mr. Jones; he was a fellow-workman of yours, was he not?—Yes.

5511. He was a man highly honoured at Leicester, I believe, on account of his genius?—Yes.

5512. They are engaged now in erecting a public monument to him, are they not?—Yes.

5513. You were well acquainted with him?—Yes.

5514. Is it not the fact that his sentiments upon this subject were very much in conformity with those which you have expressed?—Yes.

5515. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you any further statement or observations to make to the Committee?—What I have to say simply is, that having experienced the net system for nine years, I fully appreciate it, and believe that the system will be found to improve the habits of the workmen, and society generally in the locality, and the poor's rates, in my opinion, will be materially reduced by it. I think that if the system were generally introduced the condition of the workmen would be greatly improved, and that we should have cause greatly to rejoice in the change.

5516. Mr. *Mundy.*] Have any of Mr. Preston's workmen been desirous of going back to the other system?—No, not any.

5517. You do not wish it yourself?—No.

5518. Sir *J. Walmsley.*] Have you any remarks to make upon any document that has been put in?—Yes, I have this remark to make: A document was put into my hands by a person named Mitchell, with reference to his son's work. I understand it was stated by Mr. Corah that Mr. Elliott had stated to this Committee, in reference to this case of Mr. Derbyshire's, that they got the same individual, the son, to sign a note to say that he never received 30*s.* as charges; that they did not put the question as it was given in evidence, but that what they did was simply to get him to sign a paper to contradict something that never was said. Now the father has given me this to correct that, and to state that what was given in by Mr. Buckby was true within a fraction; the paper runs as follows: "The first week's work, the gross earnings of the individual was 13 *s.* 3½*d.*, the charges were 13 *s.* 1 *d.*, therefore the individual for that week would receive 2½ *d.*; and there was a second week's work, 1*l.* 2 *s.* 10 *d.* as the gross, 16 *s.* 1 *d.* charges, received 6 *s.* 9 *d.*" Now these two were coupled together, and were put as evidence. The father positively said these were facts as given in evidence by Mr. Buckby, and that the note that was got from him was got from him in an undermining and improper manner.

5519. By whom?—By Mr. Derbyshire. The state of the case was not properly put to him, and consequently he signed the note under those circumstances.

Veneris, 15° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir Henry Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Wicknam.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Ingham.

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Thomas Newstead*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *T. Newstead.*

15 June 1855.

5520. *Chairman.*] ARE you a Framework-knitter?—Yes.

5521. By whom are you employed now?—Messrs. Rawston & Donisthorp.

5522. Of where?—Of Leicester.

5523. Have you worked for Mr. Thomas Corah?—Yes.

5524. How long?—About four months was all the time I worked to him.

5525. Is it customary for the owners of frames to charge rent?—I believe it is.

5526. Do you know that it is?—I know it is; I know he charged it to me.

5527. What is the general rent charged per week for a narrow frame?—One shilling.

5528. Are there any other charges besides rent which have to be paid by the workmen?—Yes, if they are journeymen; but that work I took myself, and took it in myself.

5529. What are those charges?—There would be 6*d.* for winding, and 6*d.* for standing, and 3*d.* for taking in; amounting in the whole to about 1*s.* 3*d.*

5530. Besides the frame rent, there would be 6*d.* for winding, 6*d.* for standing, and 3*d.* for taking in?—Generally.

5531. Does that include all the charges?—In winter time they find their own coal and candle.

5532. Is that all?—I do not know that there is anything more charged on a narrow frame generally; if there is, I do not know of it.

5533. Is it customary for employers to charge rent when a frame is only partially employed?—They generally do so.

5534. That is a general custom, is it?—Yes; I do not say that they all do so at all times, but it is generally so.

5535. There are exceptions?—Yes.

5536. Is it customary to charge rent when a workman is sick?—Yes, in most instances, I think.

5537. Is it a general custom that applies to all employers, or does it apply only to some?—I think it is general.

5538. But you say there are exceptions?—There may be some exceptions, but I do not know of any; I do not know of anybody that has not been charged it; generally speaking, it is accounted that they always do take it; but some, if they did take it, would not mention it for fear they should lose the work.

5539. Have you ever been put upon stint, and charged full rent?—No, I do not know that I have. I have been on short work once, but it was some years ago, from Mr. Gregory; but he did not take full rent; he took according to what I did.

5540. You have not yourself been charged full rent when you have been put upon stint?—No.

5541. Have you ever been charged full rent when you have been sick?—Yes; Mr. Corah charged me full rent when I was sick.

5542. How long were you sick?—I was sick five weeks, and he took 4*s.* rent, and let me off one.

5543. How

5543. How long is that ago?—I think it was the 28th of August.

5544. Have you any account which will show when it was?—Yes (*the Witness referred to a book*); from the 1st of August to the 9th of September.

5545. In what year?—1854.

5546. Last year?—Yes.

5547. You were then sick and unable to work?—I was sick five weeks in that time.

5548. And for the time that you were unable to work Mr. Corah, you say, took rent?—He took 4*s.* out of 5*s.*

5549. Were you employed direct to Mr. Corah's warehouse?—Yes.

5550. Had you any communication with Mr. Corah yourself upon it?—I had on the last occasion, on the 9th of September, because I took the work in myself.

5551. What occurred then?—On the 5th of August I sent it.

5552. Did you make any application to Mr. Corah to be allowed a reduction from the rent when you were sick?—Yes; that was on the 9th of September.

5553. What did you say to him?—I said, "It is very hard, sir, that you should take all the rent when I have been sick. I sent you word that I was sick, and I have never been able to work since."

5554. What was his answer?—He did not say anything for some minutes; at last he turned round and said, "Well, we will omit one week, and take for three weeks out of the four;" allowing me 1 *s.* out of 5*s.* On the 5th of August he took 2*s.*, when I had been bad one week.

5555. You had not been able to work one week?—No.

5556. And between the 5th of August and the 9th of September you were not able to work?—I had been ill four weeks longer, and the fifth week I worked.

5557. Mr. Corah took rent for three weeks, and allowed you one?—Yes.

5558. Do you know other men who have been similarly situated?—No, I do not know that I do; I have heard them talk of it in the warehouse, but I cannot say how true it may be; I have heard them say that he has taken the rent from them several times, when I have been talking in the lobby.

5559. Are you quite sure that Mr. Corah knew you were ill at the time?—Yes; in the first instance I sent in the work by a brother-in-law of mine, and he told him I was ill, and that he thought it hard that he should take two rents when I had been bad one week out of the two.

5560. And did you tell him the same thing yourself?—When I went in.

5561. Was that conversation with Mr. Corah himself?—Yes.

5562. Mr. Thomas Corah?—Yes.

5563. Had you settled your rent account with Mr. Corah previous to the 28th of July last year?—Yes.

5564. What was the cost of making the six dozen pairs that you took in?—Ten shillings and threepence; 1*s.* 8½*d.* per dozen.

5565. And what were the deductions? Was there the charge of 1*s.* for seaming?—A shilling for seaming, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for ribbed tops; that I had to pay besides out of my own pocket; when he took 2*s.* rent, there remained 8*s.* 3*d.*

5566. That would make, supposing it was 1*s.* for seaming, 1*s.* 6*d.* for ribbed tops, and 2*s.* for rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*, would it not?—They were ribbed tops; the gross earning for the workman was 7*s.* 9*d.*; he took two weeks.

5567. Would not that be 4*s.* 6*d.*, according to what you have been saying; 1*s.* for seaming, 1*s.* 6*d.* for the rib tops, and 2*s.* for rent?—Yes.

5568. Would not that be 4*s.* 6*d.*?—Yes.

5569. You had 10*s.* 3*d.*, had you not?—The gross amount came to 10*s.* 3*d.*, and there were those deductions to be taken off.

5570. If you deduct 4*s.* 6*d.* from 10*s.* 3*d.*, there remains 5*s.* 9*d.*?—Yes.

5571. Mr. *Wickham.*] How many hours did you work?—I was not very well so as to be able to sit my hours to work.

5572. *Chairman.*] This 5*s.* 9*d.* was for two weeks' work?—Yes.

5573. Mr. *Wickham.*] Did you work full days?—No.

5574. Mr. *Biggs.*] Did you not say you worked direct to the warehouse?—Yes.

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5575. Then you do not incur any other charges than rent under those circumstances, do you?—Only just the rent; the other is for seaming and tops; I never took anything off for standing or for winding; there is nothing here either for winding or standing; I have not added that; if I was to add that to it, it would make another shilling or fifteen pence, but I have only put down what I paid; there is 2*s.* he took for rent, and half-a-crown for tops and seaming, which I was obliged to pay.

5576. Mr. *Mundy.*] Why did you not work the full time?—Because I was ill and not able.

5577. Mr. *Biggs.*] Does Mr. Corah give out the tops from the warehouse?—No; if he does he charges 3 *d.* a dozen.

5578. You find your tops yourself in the 1 *s.* 8 ½ *d.*?—Yes.

5579. Mr. *Gardner.*] Will you explain what these tops are?—They are for children's socks; ribbed tops.

5580. What is a ribbed top?—The top that goes round the top of the sock, the same as a wristband.

5581. You say you paid 1 *s.* 6 *d.* for ribbed tops?—Yes, for those six dozen.

5582. Mr. *Biggs.*] But you did not pay it to Mr. Corah?—No.

5583. You did not pay for the seaming to Mr. Corah?—No, of course not.

5584. *Chairman.*] Are you a member of a sick club?—Yes.

5585. Did you receive a weekly allowance from your benefit society during the period of your paying 1 *s.* a week rent?—Yes.

5586. Have you a certificate of having received that amount from the club?—No; but Sir Joshua Walmsley has it, if you have not; I gave it to him.

5587. Would you be prepared, if necessary, to depose upon oath to the truth of these statements?—Yes, I would anywhere.

5588. Sir *H. Halford.*] Did you show the certificate at the warehouse?—No; I was never asked for it.

5589. *Chairman.*] Is it possible that you can have made any mistake in what you have stated to the Committee?—No; I am confident that I have made no mistake.

5590. Have you heard frequent complaints from the workmen of similar oppressive deductions being made?—Yes, they generally complain of it; they wish the charges system to be done away with.

5591. Are those complaints made against any particular manufacturer, or are they made generally against the trade?—Generally against the trade; they are not against any one in particular.

5592. Against the custom?—Yes.

5593. Do you know that a number of your fellow-workmen can attest with truth to similar statements?—I cannot speak to any one who would come and say it, but I know I have heard them say so myself; it is generally their custom when they get together to give that as their opinion.

5594. Do you know that it has been stated to this Committee, by Mr. Corah, that he has never charged rent when a man was sick?—I have heard it talked of, but I never saw any account of it, and nobody has ever told me of it; I have heard people talking about his having said so; I do not know further than that; I have never seen it in print, or anything of that kind.

5595. You have only heard it rumoured?—That is all.

5596. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say that the custom of taking full rent for half work is general in the trade; do you speak of your own personal knowledge, or from mere rumour and report, and from the conversations of your fellow-workmen; what authority have you for such an assertion as that?—I have heard several of my fellow-workmen say that they have paid full rent when they have only had half work many different times, but I do not remember exactly the time. If I was down at home now, and they were to begin to talk about it, if any of them had been sick or short of work, they would say, "I have had full rent to pay this week;" that is generally the discourse one among another. If they had begun on Tuesday and ended on Saturday morning, they would say one to another, "How did you get on this week?" "Well, he charged me full rent, and I have had all my expenses to pay." That is, generally speaking, the answer you will get.

5597. Is that said by Mr. Corah's hands, or by the workmen generally?—I have heard Mr. Corah's hands say so in his own lobby; my time was very short with Mr. Corah, but it was too long for me; I did not like it.

5598. *Chairman.*]

5598. *Chairman.*] How long have you been a framework-knitter?—I was brought up to it from a youth; I have worked at it for 42 years.

5599. How old are you now?—Turned 50.

5600. How long have you belonged to a benefit society?—Ever since I was 16 years of age, but not in the one I belong to now. I lived in the country when I was first in work, but I have been in the one I am in now for upwards of 20 years.

5601. Are you a married man?—Yes.

5602. Have you any family?—No.

5603. Sir *H. Halford.*] There was something said about stint; what do you understand exactly by the word "stint"?—That is when they have short work.

5604. Less work than they can do?—Yes: when they say "I am on the stint," they mean they have not full work.

5605. That is, that less stuff is given out to them than is sufficient to employ their time?—Yes.

5606. Mr. *Biggs.*] You worked to Mr. Corah, and made on one occasion six dozen and a half hose at 1 *s.* 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* a dozen, making together 10 *s.* 3 *d.*, and you paid out of that 2 *s.* for rent, did you not?—Yes.

5607. And you received 8 *s.* 3 *d.* at the warehouse?—Yes.

5608. *Chairman.*] You had to pay for the ribbed tops 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, and the seaming 1 *s.*?—Yes.

5609. Mr. *Gardner.*] To whom did you pay the 1 *s.* for seaming and the 1 *s.* 6 *d.*?—To a woman of the name of Marryott, who lived in Knighton-street.

5610. And who did you pay for the tops?—A man of the name of Ward, who lived in Knighton-street also, made the tops.

5611. *Chairman.*] You had that deducted by different persons?—Yes; it did not come to me; I had to pay it away, though I received it at the warehouse.

5612. Mr. *Gardner.*] On the occasion on which you were charged full rent when you were sick, was that done by Mr. Corah, senior, or Mr. Corah, junior?—I might say the first time (because there were two different times) my brother-in-law took my work in, when I sent the six dozen in; I had worked one week before I was taken ill, and when I had been ill a week, I sent my brother-in-law with the six dozen to say that I was ill, and that he was not to bring me any more material till I was ready to work again; and when Mr. Corah paid him the 8*s.* 3*d.* he took the 2*s.* rent. My brother said, "I think it is very hard that you should take 2*s.* rent; the man has not been able to do a bit of work all this week, and I am not going to take any more stuff at present, because he is not able to work." Mr. Corah made him no answer, but paid him the money, and away my brother came.

5613. Mr. *Mundy.*] Was that the father or the son?—The father.

5614. Mr. *Gardner.*] When your brother-in-law took the work in, he remonstrated against the full rent being taken?—Yes; he said he thought it very hard that he should take two weeks' rent; he expected he would take one, and so did I.

5615. You went a second time yourself, did you not?—Yes.

5616. And did you then represent the same thing to Mr. Corah, the father?—Yes.

5617. Was any one present on that occasion?—I do not remember that anybody was.

5618. And on that second occasion Mr. Corah forgave you one week?—Yes.

5619. Do you recollect what the state of trade was at that time?—It was rather better than it had been; it had been rather slacker than it was at that time; it was rather reviving again; there was rather more work just at that time than there had been for a few months before.

5620. How long did you work for Mr. Corah?—My book is not dated, or else I could tell.

5621. About how long?—About four months, I should think, altogether.

5622. What was the state of trade while you were working for Mr. Corah?—During the first part of the time I worked for him it was very flat.

5623. And did it improve towards the close?—Yes, it got rather better.

5624. You found no difficulty in getting employment elsewhere?—No, I was employed directly.

Mr. *T. Newstead.*

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5625. Do you recollect about the year in which you began to work at the knitting, when you were 16 years of age; how old are you now?—I think I was born in the year 1795 or 1796; I am not certain which.

5626. Then you would have begun to work in the hosiery trade about the year 1810?—1810 or 1811, I believe was about the time.

5627. What was the rate of wages then as compared with the rate of wages now?—There was none of the low sort of work made at that time that there has been since; but I can tell you what it was when I had been at it about two years; of course I could not make the best sort of work at first; but, after two years, I went into a finer gauge frame. I worked in a 30-gauge frame, and I used to have 13 *s.* a dozen for making plain women's hose at that time.

5628. What is the price paid for them now?—I can hardly say, for it is a long time since I have made them; but I should not think they were more than 5*s.* 6*d.* at the outside.

5629. Was the system of frame rent and charges the same then as it is now?—I think the charges are more now; at that time the rent of a narrow frame was 1 *s.*, a fine 30-gauge frame; but a coarse one was 9 *d.*; that is what was paid to the manufacturer, without the shop charges.

5630. Were the charges much the same then as they are now?—Yes, I believe they were much the same.

5631. But you think the rent was somewhat less?—Yes, I know it was less in the coarse gauges.

5632. What wages did you net about that time; I mean what money did you clear?—When I was a youth, do you mean, when I first began?

5633. No, when you got into full work?—I could get at that time of day, perhaps, 15 *s.* or 16 *s.* if I was steady and industrious, and worked the week.

5634. If you worked from Monday to Saturday, do you mean?—Yes.

5635. Are you able to work as well now as you were then?—I cannot say I am; my eyes will not allow me.

5636. Suppose you were as well able to work now as you were then, what wages would you get if you were working at the same sort of work, do you suppose?—I cannot speak to that, because I could not see to work in a fine frame now.

5637. But for the same amount of work that you were able to make then, what would you get now; you say you netted a long time ago 14*s.* or 15*s.* a week?—Yes; but, as I said before, I cannot speak to what the price is now, for I am quite out of that line of business altogether.

5638. Mr. *Biggs.*] If you worked the same number of hours, and were as industrious now as you were then, what could you get at the work you are on now?—Perhaps from 7 *s.* to 8 *s.*

5639. Mr. *Gardner.*] That is not the same kind of work that you used to get 14 *s.* or 15 *s.* for?—No.

5640. You are unable to say what a man would get now for doing the same amount of work of the same kind as that which you used to do?—I cannot speak to that.

5641. You have had a long experience of Leicester; do you think that wages upon the whole are lower now than they were when you first began?—Yes; they are not above one-half, generally.

5642. In all branches?—Yes, without it is fancy work.

5643. Was there what you call fancy work made at that time?—Very little to what there is now.

5644. The fancy-work branch, I understand you to say, is the best paid now?—Undoubtedly it is.

5645. What do you think an industrious hand can get at it?—I cannot say; I never worked at it myself; so that I cannot speak to what they get.

5646. Did you never hear what amount a man could earn at it?—No, I do not know that I ever did. There are, of course, different sorts of work, and for one sort of work a man gets much more than he does for another.

5647. Did you ever hear of a hand getting 15 *s.* or 16 *s.* a week at any kind of work in Leicester?—At any time?

5648. No, now.—No, I do not know that I have ever heard it mentioned.

5649. What do you think is the opinion of the working population of Leicester upon the subject of these stoppages and charges?—Their opinion is that they would wish for them to come off; they think that if they were done away

away with they would be better off, and have a better chance than they have now; they would like to have their wages net without any charges at all; I believe that is their general feeling.

5650. Do you think they believe that they would receive the wages they now receive, and that they would not have to pay these charges at all in any way?—No, I do not think they think of that; I do not think they look for it.

5651. Do they anticipate that wages would be reduced by the amount of these stoppages?—No; they expect that something would be taken off their work, but I cannot say to what amount, if they were to pay no charges.

5652. They do not know that more might not be taken off?—I do not know whether it would be more or less; but if they took more they would take it nearly all, for they take it nearly all now; what I mean is this, that they take nearly all a man does get now, and if they took more they would take it all, for there is very little left for the workmen now.

5653. What do you think is about the average net earnings of an able man who is employed in a narrow frame now, taking one with another?—I should think from 6 *s.* to 7 *s.* would be the outside, and they would not do that on the average.

5654. Supposing these stoppages were prevented by Act of Parliament, can you show us that there is any security that a man who now nets 6 *s.* or 7 *s.* a week may not be put in such a position as not to be able to get more than 5 *s.*?—I do not know; but they would be better satisfied if they knew what they were going to have when they began to work without anything being taken off.

5655. Do they not know pretty well now what they are going to have?—No.

5656. Why not?—If I was a journeyman, and worked in a shop, I should go on Monday and expect to go to work, and when I went there perhaps the master would say, "I have no stuff; you may come again at dinner time," and when you went at dinner time, he might give you out a bit to last till Wednesday, and then when you go again on the Wednesday you may be told, "Wait till I come back, and then I will see if there will be any more."

5657. Living in Leicester, you know, of course, that the trade is subject to great fluctuations, and that sometimes it happens that there is not a demand for goods?—But there is always a demand by the middleman of his charges.

5658. But before you enter into an engagement with the middleman, you know that he will take his charges in any case, do you not?—That is why we want the charges to be taken off.

5659. You know at the beginning of the week that whatever happens, the middleman will take his rent?—Yes; he in general looks for it, and, with few exceptions, he takes it.

5660. Mr. *Biggs.*] When you were young and first learnt the trade, you worked in a 30-gauge frame?—Yes.

5661. That description of work has gone out very much, has it not?—Yes.

5662. There is very little of it, I believe, made now as compared with what was made then; is not that so?—Yes.

5663. When you first knew the trade there were no straight-downs made?—No.

5664. And there were no wide frames?—No.

5665. Whereas now, I believe, there are a great many wide frames, and a large proportion of the work made is straight-down work?—Yes.

5666. Which has superseded the other class of goods?—Yes.

5667. The wages for work made in the wide frames are now nearly as good, or fully so, as the wages of the narrow frames when you were a boy; is not that so?—No.

5668. You think it is not so?—No, I am sure they are not so good as the narrow framework was when I was young.

5669. Is the difference serious, or what is the difference?—I think that if a man works in a wide frame, a three-hose frame, he will not get 10 *s.* clear money.

5670. You mean in the town of Leicester, do you not?—Yes; I will not say you might not find one, but it would be an exception if you did.

5671. Are you speaking of the middle-aged ablebodied men?—Yes.

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5672. Mr. *Ingham.*] What were the gains in a narrow frame when you were young?—About 14*s.* or 15*s.*

5673. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you think a man would get for making plain shirts on a wide frame?—Do you mean properly wrought, with gussets and all?

5674. Yes.—I do not know what they are; I never heard the price. I do not know it, and cannot speak to it.

5675. Mr. Loveday has stated in his evidence that a man earns 16*s.* 6*d.* per week net for plain shirts?—You should have had Mr. Loveday's books up to prove it; if you had, you would find the difference, I think.

5676. Have you any idea how much a man would get working at the ribbed hose?—No; I never had anything to do with them.

5677. Mr. Loveday gives a statement of a man earning 17*s.* 6*d.* net?—He means taking 10*s.* off, I should think; if you were to look at his books, you would find that to be the case, in my opinion.

5678. Mr. Loveday's statement is, that 17*s.* 6*d.* is net, and that the rent and charges amount to 1*s.* 9*d.*; are you in a position to state to the Committee that that statement is incorrect?—I am not going to deny all that he says, but at the same time I am not going to take what he says for truth. I cannot speak to it, but I should never take it for truth. I should not think that any man in Leicestershire could get it.

5679. Then, as far as your knowledge of the matter goes, you think that that is an erroneous statement?—Yes, I do.

5680. Have you yourself ever been engaged in that branch of the trade?—No, never in my life.

5681. Are you acquainted with any people who are engaged in it?—Yes, but I never heard anybody talk of getting such wages as that.

5682. What wages have you heard them talking of getting?—I do not know.

5683. How then can you say that this is an erroneous statement?—I have never heard them say exactly what they get; but I have heard them say the ribbed hands are no better off than the plain.

5684. And what do the plain hands get?—In a plain frame they get from 6*s.* to 7*s.*

5685. On what grounds do you dispute the accuracy of this statement of Mr. Loveday?—Because the ribbed hands I am acquainted with say they are no better off than the plain hands, and the plain hands get from 6*s.* to 7*s.* on a narrow frame.

5686. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you know Mr. Loveday?—Yes.

5687. You believe him to be a respectable man, do you not?—I do not know; I think he speaks very false, from what I hear other people say of him; I never have had any conversation with him for years.

5688. Mr. *Gardner.*] But Mr. Loveday, a person who has been examined before the Committee, sends in a printed paper, stating that such and such wages are obtained; you live in the neighbourhood, and say that this statement is an erroneous one?—I think so.

5689. On what grounds do you think that it is an erroneous statement?—I go by what they tell me; I am acquainted with some of the ribbed hands, and have heard them say that they are no better off than the plain hands are, and I know what the plain hands get; that is what I judge by.

5690. You know the sort of persons that are employed by Mr. Loveday, and persons in a similar situation?—I do not know them personally.

5691. You say those people tell you that they only take away 6*s.* or 7*s.*?—I do not say they do from Mr. Loveday.

5692. For that description of work?—I say they say they are no better off than the plain hands are.

5693. How much do the plain hands get?—From 6*s.* to 7*s.* a week; if they get more, they are better off. I know that a plain hand does not get more than that on the average.

5694. Mr. *Biggs.*] In the case of Mr. Loveday, the ribbed work he talks of is not ribbed hose, but it is ribbed shirts, I believe?—I cannot speak as to that at all.

5695. You believe that the existence of middlemen is necessary to carry on the hosiery business, do you not?—I think they would do better without them than with them.

5696. You work direct to the warehouse, do you not?—Yes.

5697. But

5697. But if you were a journeyman in the country, or in a large shop, you must then, under those circumstances, work through a middleman?—I do not say they are obliged to do that.

5698. You would work through the master of the shop?—When I lived in the country I used to bring my work in.

5699. *Chairman.*] How long did you live in the country?—Till I was 22 years of age.

5700. Where did you live?—At Great Glynn; that is my native place.

5701. Mr. *Biggs.*] Were you a journeyman at this time?—No; I had two frames. I used to bring the work in to the warehouse.

5702. Suppose you had been a journeyman, working in a shop of 20 or 30 frames, you must be represented by a middleman?—If I worked in a shop, I must.

5703. If that middleman does not make charges such as he makes in the present mode of conducting the business, how is he to be paid for his services?—I do not know how he is to be paid, unless the manufacturer pays him; he must have it one way or other; a man cannot be expected to work for nothing.

5704. If he does not make the present charges, must he not make a reduction in the price paid to the workmen?—I do not know how it might be regulated.

5705. Do you see any other mode that could be adopted?—I think it would be better to have no middlemen at all.

5706. But is it possible to carry on the trade without them?—It used to be; it did not use to be the practice to have middlemen to the same extent that it is now.

5707. Is it possible to carry on the trade now without middlemen?—I think it is; and I think it would be a great deal more honourable, and better for trade if they were done away with, for there is more discontent against middlemen than there is against the manufacturers.

5708. Sir *H. Halford.*] Might not the middlemen be paid by the manufacturers?—I do not see why they should not be.

5709. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you mean that the middlemen might be paid by the manufacturers, and that you might have your present wages as well?—I cannot speak to that; I think the workmen do not look for that altogether; perhaps the wages might be a little higher, so as to bring them to the same amount, but that would be according to circumstances.

5710. Mr. *Gardner.*] What are those circumstances?—Good trade.

5711. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you at all aware whether the number of middlemen has comparatively increased since you were first acquainted with the trade?—I cannot say; but there are a great many that live without work that are able to work.

5712. Do you think there are more now than there used to be?—Yes.

5713. *Chairman.*] Did you work under a middleman when you lived at Great Glynn?—Yes, part of the time.

5714. Mr. *Gardner.*] There can be no doubt about the fact that wages in the hosiery trade are, unfortunately, very low; what is the reason of that, do you think?—One thing that causes wages to go down is this, that the middleman in many instances gets the employment if he can, if it is only to make his charges; he will go about and take work at a less price, so as to keep the frames going, in order that he may take his charges.

5715. But why do the people submit to those exactions?—Because they cannot help themselves.

5716. Why not?—Because they are in such a low condition that they must either do what little work there is, or go to the parish.

5717. The reason is that there are more hands than there is work for, is not that the case?—In a slack time it is.

5718. Do you think that the effect of an Act of Parliament putting down these stoppages would be to alter the relation between the amount of work given out and the people who wish to do it?—I cannot say. I think it would be a better system, and that the trade would be carried on upon a sounder foundation if it were so, for you can never depend on it as things are now between the middleman and third man; he will use all the imposition he can; I have known instances of that; not with regard to myself, because I have not worked much under a middleman, but I have known instances of it with others.

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5719. When you speak of impositions, you mean that the charges are higher than they ought to be?—Yes, they are.

5720. But the workmen go to these middlemen perfectly aware of the existence of what you call imposition?—They know they will have to pay the charges if they work the week, but in many cases, if the men are only employed four days, they will take the six days' charges.

5721. But the workmen know that beforehand, do they not?—It is generally expected that they will do it, but what is a man to do if he has nothing else to do?

5722. The question, you see, is this, Whether an Act of Parliament would actually tend towards putting more money into the workman's pocket at the end of the week?—I judge that it would in the course of time; it might not be the case at the present moment, but I think it would in the course of a short time.

5723. What reason have you, as a practical man, for thinking so?—Because I think that work would be better regulated: it would not go into so many hands as it does now.

5724. What would become of those hands who would be left without work?—Parents would be able to send their children to school, instead of putting them to the winding wheel; and a man would put his wife to keep the children cleanly, instead of doing part of the work.

5725. Do you think that the effect of an Act of Parliament would be to raise the wages of the head of the family to the same amount as is now earned by himself and two or three children?—Yes.

5726. *Chairman.*] Suppose it did not raise the wages, would not an alteration of the law produce a better understanding between the workmen and their employers?—Yes, I think so; that is what they look for; it is the imposition they grumble at more than anything else.

5727. Sir *H. Halford.*] You say that when you had not sufficient materials given you to employ your whole time, there was a corresponding reduction in frame rent; that is to say, when you were under stint you had not full frame rent to pay?—No; I said, that if we worked four days, they most generally would take it, and did take it, for the whole week. If we had four days' work out of the week, the master would take the whole of the charges for the week.

5728. I understood you to say, before, that when you were under stint full frame rent was not taken?—No; I did not mean to say that.

5729. You mean to say that full frame rent is taken?—Yes.

5730. *Chairman.*] I asked you whether you had ever been put upon stint, and charged full rent, and you said, No?—Yes; I said I had not myself. I said I once worked to Mr. Gregory, and he did not take full rent.

5731. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is that the general practice or not?—I cannot say it is a general practice.

5732. When that happened, how was it computed?—That is a good while ago.

5733. Do you mean you have not been upon stint of late years?—I have been upon stint, but I have never been charged full rent; I cannot speak to one instance myself. In a general way, I had either full work or no work at all.

5734. It has not often happened to you that you have had less materials given out to you than would employ you?—No; I have generally been wholly out of work, or else I have had what I could do.

5735. Your eyesight appears to fail you a little?—Yes.

5736. Do you attribute that to the nature of the work you have been employed upon?—Partly; but I had inflammation in my eyes some years ago, and they have not been so strong since as they were before.

5737. Do you know it to be frequently the case with your fellow-workmen that their eyesight fails them?—Yes; when they are getting a little in years they all take to glasses.

5738. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose a man were not allowed to deduct the rent, what security would he have that his frame was not being worked for some other man?—I do not properly understand the question.

5739. Suppose a knitter hires a frame of a man, and takes it to his cottage, and suppose the person of whom he hires it is not allowed to deduct the rent for that frame, what security would he have that his frame was not being worked for somebody else?—I should think nobody would set a frame unless he

he expected some remuneration from it. There are plenty of people who own frames who are not manufacturers. Mr. T. Newstead. 15 June 1855.

5740. I want to know what security a manufacturer would have in such a case, that the knitter was not using his frame with somebody else's material?—He knows what work the knitter brings in, and if he does not bring in a proper complement of work, he would think he was working for somebody else; and, if he wanted work done, he would take the frame away from that man, and let it to somebody else.

5741. Supposing these frames to be scattered about in villages, this kind of imposition upon the manufacturer might be going on for weeks or months without his knowing anything about it?—If the workman did not bring in a proper quantity of work, the manufacturer would expect that his frame was working to somebody else; he would soon know whether that was the case or not; a manufacturer knows what a workman can do. He would know at once whether a proper complement of work came in or not.

5742. Mr. *Biggs.*] A man with one frame might impose upon a manufacturer in that way; but if he had half-a-dozen or a score of frames, the manufacturer could tell, could he not?—Do you think that *you* are not imposed on now in the same way? Because if you think you are not, I can tell you that you are deceived.

5743. Mr. *Gardner.*] Even under the present system?—Yes; these middlemen, if they have a manufacturer's frame, and he will not employ it, will work it to another man, and charge the journeyman with the rent, and will not pay the rent to the manufacturer who owns the frame.

5744. But under the present system the manufacturer gets his rent for the frame at all events, does he not?—He would not under that system.

5745. But at present?—No; he would not, and does not. Suppose Mr. Biggs sets me 20 frames, and he cannot fully employ them, I pay him rent for the frames that he gives me work out for, and I go to another warehouse and get work for those Mr. Biggs does not give me work for; I get rent for the whole, and he only gets rent for part.

5746. The manufacturer then is cheated under the present system?—He is.

5747. Do you not think he would be more cheated if there were no power to take rent at all?—No; I do not think he would.

5748. Surely if he were not allowed to charge the rent, he would have no check at all?—He charges as much rent as he gives out work for. If there are more frames than there is work given out for, the man gets work from another warehouse, keeps the same journeymen at work in that way, and pockets the remainder of the rent which he never takes to the manufacturer.

Mr. *Thomas Payne*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. T. Payne.

5749. Mr. *Gardner.*] WHAT is your trade?—A Manufacturer.

5750. At what place?—At Hinckley.

5751. How long have you been a manufacturer?—About 20 years.

5752. In what branch of the trade are you?—The cotton hosiery.

5753. How many frames have you?—About 100; I employ a little over 100; I have not quite 100 of my own.

5754. You have some independent frames?—A few.

5755. About how many?—About 20.

5756. What kinds of frames are those?—Various kinds; all kinds, I may say.

5757. Narrow?—Narrow and wide.

5758. Circular?—I have a few circular.

5759. Are your circular frames placed in a factory?—They are placed in a large room.

5760. A large shop?—Yes.

5761. What is your opinion of the tendency of what is called the factory system?—There is great difficulty in persuading persons to attend during the factory or regular hours.

5762. Have you yourself experienced that difficulty?—I have.

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5763. I understand you to say that the only frames that you have in this shop are circular?—Yes.

5764. Had you ever any other kind of frames?—Yes.

5765. What kind?—For footing the circular goods; footers.

5766. What kind of frames were they?—They were wide frames.

5767. Have you removed those frames from the shop?—I have.

5768. Why?—Because I found there was great difficulty and trouble with the workmen in getting them to attend regular hours.

5769. To what extent did this irregularity go?—I can scarcely say.

5770. What was the case on Monday generally?—They would be coming in at all times, and be going out frequently during the morning and day.

5771. Sometimes they would not come at all on Monday, I suppose?—Sometimes they would not come for a day or two.

5772. Was there much irregularity on Tuesday?—Not so much as on the Monday.

5773. But still there was considerable irregularity on the Tuesday, was there not?—Yes.

5774. And on Wednesday what would they do?—On Wednesday they would begin to work pretty well.

5775. And Thursday?—The same.

5776. And Friday?—And Friday.

5777. How many hours did they work on those days?—Ten hours and a half is the fixed time; but I should say, perhaps, eight hours, including Monday and Saturday; taking Monday and Saturday, the six days would, perhaps, average eight hours; say 50 hours.

5778. You are satisfied that they did not work on the average more than 48 to 50 hours?—Fifty hours.

5779. Is that the general average time, do you think?—I should say it is more than the average.

5780. Does that apply to the hosiery knitters generally?—I should say it is more than the average.

5781. Can you tell us what you should consider the average?—I cannot.

5782. But you think it would be lower than 48?—I should think it would.

5783. Do you know the number of hours in which they work in Lancashire by Act of Parliament?—I believe it is 10½.

5784. This irregularity of the knitters must naturally reduce their wages very considerably, must it not?—It does.

5785. Are you aware that they are in the habit of coming to Parliament every year to request Parliament to do something which shall have the effect of raising their wages?—Yes.

5786. That seems to be a false position, does it not?—I think so; I think it is a mistaken idea.

5787. You would admit, I suppose, that their wages, if they worked hard, are not very remunerative?—They are not.

5788. But be that as it may, they do not work nearly as hard as they do in many other branches of manufacture?—They do not.

5789. They might get considerable more wages, I suppose, if they were to work the time that the operative population in Lancashire work?—They could.

5790. Have you any statement to make to the Committee as to the wages that you are in the habit of paying?—I did not know that I should be asked that question, but I certainly have made a statement, in the event of my being.

5791. Mr. *Biggs.*] What is the paper that you hold in your hand?—A statement of the wages earned by the first 40 in my list upon the pay-book on the 6th of January.

5792. This year?—Yes.

5793. Do you mean net wages?—No, the gross wages.

5794. Have you the net wages also?—I have made a calculation at the end. The first week, the first 40 would be 14 *l.* 17 *s.* 4 *d.*; the next 40 in the following week, commencing where I left off before, would be 17 *l.* 19 *s.* 7 *d.* There are fixed hours for attending. I should begin at the bottom of the list; in this case it is 14 *l.* 4 *s.* 4½ *d.* I have taken different forties, that I might take the average. The 27th of January, 16 *l.* 3 *s.* 5 *d.* I have taken during the same

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same time the amount of rent they paid. Then I miss one month, that I should extend it over a time as well as I could.

5795. Mr. *Wickham.*] The object of this statement is to show what these men earned net per week?—Yes, it is. On the 3d of March it is 13 *l.* 2 *s.* 3 *d.*; the 10th of March, 13 *l.* 13 *s.* 7 ½ *d.*; the 17th of March, 17 *l.* 9 *s.* 5 *d.*; the 24th of March, 15 *l.* 16 *s.* 9 *d.*; the 5th of May, 15 *l.* 6 *s.* 7 *d.*; the 12th of May, 16 *l.* 11 *s.* 9 *d.*; the 19th of May, 18 *l.* 18 *s.* 2 ½ *d.*; the 26th of May, 20 *l.* 6 *s.* 11 ½ *d.* The average of the 6th of January is 7 *s.* 1 *d.* per frame; on the 13th it is 9 *s.* per frame; on the 20th it is 7 *s.* 1 *d.* per frame; on the 27th, 8 *s.* 1 *d.* per frame.

5796. Are these net or gross?—Gross. On the 3d of March, 6 *s.* 7 *d.* per frame; on the 10th, 6 *s.* 10 *d.*; on the 17th, 8 *s.* 9 *d.*; on the 24th, 7 *s.* 11 *d.*; May the 5th, 7 *s.* 8 *d.*; May the 12th, 8 *s.* 3 *d.*; May the 19th, 9 *s.* 5 *d.*; the 26th of May, 10 *s.* 2 *d.*; then by adding them together, and dividing them by 12, it gives the net average of 8 *s.* 0 ¾ *d.* per frame.

5797. What deductions are those subject to?—Frame rents only; those frame rents, taking wide and narrow, would amount to something under 1 *s.* 3 *d.* per week; the amount of rent received from the same frames that I have named is 29 *l.* 13 *s.* 5 *d.*, and fifteen pence per week, averaging them, would be 30 *l.*

5798. What do you make the net earnings of those frames?—Something like 6 *s.* 10 *d.*

5799. That is the result of 12 weeks' experience?—Yes.—(*The Witness delivered in the Paper to which in his last answers he had referred*). *Vide* Appendix.

5800. Mr. *Gardner.*] You are aware, are you not, that there is an impression on the part of the working classes, that if frame rents and charges were abolished, their wages would be raised?—I believe they have that impression.

5801. They have an impression that if these charges were dispensed with, they would earn more money?—Yes.

5802. What is your own impression on that subject?—The contrary.

5803. You think it would rather tend to reduce their wages than to increase them?—I think they would certainly be more frequently without work than they are now; I have no doubt about that.

5804. Will you explain why?—It frequently happens that we employ people in order to keep the machinery going for the sake of the rent; it would injure more by being still, and by being sent to our places of residence, than it would injure in the hands of a workman.

5805. If there was no consideration in the shape of rent the frames would be frequently unemployed, would they not?—They would, at the present moment.

5806. And that would have a tendency to lead to a reduction of wages?—It would.

5807. If the middlemen were not paid in the way they are at present, by charges, how do you conceive they could be paid?—I conceive that the middlemen are the means of employing many who would not otherwise be employed; there are many that I would not myself employ, not being trustworthy.

5808. If a middleman was not allowed to make charges to his journeymen, do you see any other mode in which he could be paid, except by reducing the price paid to the workman below the price paid by the manufacturer?—He must reduce it.

5809. There would be two prices in that case?—Yes.

5810. Do you think that that would be an improvement upon the present system?—I do not see that it would.

5811. Mr. *Mundy.*] Would it affect the interests of the manufacturer?—I do not know whether it would benefit him or not.

5812. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of the statements which have been made to the Committee, as to the general condition of the people at Hinckley?—I had a paper put into my hands by Mr. Gardner, and I made a remark upon it, that I wished he would ask me a question as to what Sketchley earned, or what Dexter earned under me.

5813. I am referring rather to the evidence given by Mr. Mead, the Scripture reader, as to the general condition of the people, he having described them as being in a most lamentable condition of poverty?—They are in a bad state, no doubt.

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5814. Do you attribute that to the low rate of wages they receive, or to their idleness?—I like to be charitable.

5815. You spoke of certain workmen who were disposed to be idle, and who did not exert themselves to the utmost?—I did.

5816. Do you think that that observation applies generally to the people of Hinckley?—There are some respectable, and very respectable, stocking-makers in the place; there are some men who make the best of their time, and there are, I regret to say, many others who do not.

5817. With regard to their poverty, does that apply to the respectable and hard-working?—It does not.

5818. Then you think that the deplorable condition in which the people of Hinckley are described to be is in a great degree voluntary on their part?—I do.

5819. You think they prefer to starve and be idle rather than work?—There are many who would.

5820. To what do you ascribe that peculiarly demoralized condition of the people at Hinckley?—I do not know to what to ascribe it, unless it be to the example of their parents.

5821. When you speak of persons who do not work so much as they might do, not coming on a Monday and so on, does the same observation apply to those who work in their own houses?—It does.

5822. Do you think they might work if they pleased, but that they do not use the materials?—I do; I speak as far as I am concerned.

5823. Is it not a very strange condition of things that they should be in such a state as that?—Many are so; others are not.

5824. You speak of the advantage resulting from the employment of middlemen. Employment through their means extends, does it not, to the idle, the shuffling, and the good for nothing?—I said there were some that I would not myself employ.

5825. You spoke of that as an advantage resulting from the employment of middlemen; that persons of that character are employed by middlemen?—They are.

5826. Do you think there is an advantage in people of that character being encouraged and employed?—I do not know that there is an advantage in it; I think perhaps not.

5827. Mr. *Biggs.*] You admit, I suppose, or are of opinion, that if a manufacturer lets his frames he must have some consideration, in some shape or form, for the use of them?—Yes.

5828. What form could it assume, supposing frame rent to be abolished, except a reduction of wages?—I see no other.

5829. You have already said that the abolition of charges would tend to the reduction of wages?—Yes.

5830. The trade of Hinckley has declined of late, has it not?—Yes, the last few months.

5831. Formerly there was a good deal of hosiery made there for the United States, was there not?—A great deal.

5832. All that has disappeared, has it not?—There is nothing like the demand for it that there was, last year particularly.

5833. There were formerly many finer frames at Hinckley, were there not, than there are now?—There were.

5834. And there was formerly a tolerable demand for the goods manufactured there?—Yes.

5835. Now the demand for those goods is diminished?—Yes, for the finer class of goods.

5836. And there is, I believe, frequently great want of employment?—There are very few frames of the finer class there now.

5837. There is a frequent want of employment, is there not, for the 21-gauge frames?—There has been; not for the last three or four years.

5838. You ascribe the distress prevailing at Hinckley mainly, do you not, to the want of demand and the excess of labour?—I do.

5839. Mr. *Gardner.*] You were asked just now as to the character of the population, and you stated that you are inclined to think they are rather indolent upon the whole, and irregular in their habits?—I do.

5840. Does

5840. Does not that arise in some degree from the nature of their manufacture, from its being a domestic manufacture?—I do not know that it does.

5841. These frames are in their own houses?—Principally.

5842. They have no regular supervision?—They have not.

5843. A man can go in and out of his frame as he pleases?—Yes.

5844. If the hounds come through the village, or anything of that sort occurs, he can run after them?—Yes, and he often does so.

5845. Do you not think that that circumstance accounts in a great measure for the short and irregular hours that the framework-knitters work?—I do.

5846. Does it not account also in a great degree for the smallness of their wages?—Yes.

5847. Do you know a person of the name of Sketchley?—I do.

5848. Personally?—I do.

5849. What is Sketchley?—He professes to be a stocking-maker; but I do not think he works much at it.

5850. What do you mean when you say he "professes to be" a stocking-maker?—He calls himself so; he is a stocking-maker.

5851. Has he any other occupation?—Yes; he is a kind of agitator; he is a man who collects subscriptions from the working people, and I believe that, to a certain extent, he induces them to become dissatisfied with their employers.

5852. Do you mean that he is the secretary or officer of any society?—Yes; I do not know that he is secretary, or that he holds any office; but I know that he collects pence from the stocking-makers for a fund.

5853. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is he what we understand by a trades union agitator?—He is a union man.

5854. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is he at present engaged as a knitter, do you know?—I do not; he came to my young man to find him frames; but he, knowing him, declined to do so; that was some time back.

5855. Why did he decline to find him frames?—Because he had worked to me once, and had made his work so very badly, that the man gave him notice, and he left.

5856. You would not employ him again, because you found he was a bad workman, is that what you say?—I would not; he does not do much, and what he does he does very indifferently.

5857. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you not think that if a class of workmen are labouring under a sense of grievance, they are justified in some degree of agitation in order to procure redress?—I do.

5858. Is not that very much the case in this instance?—It is.

5859. So that you would not consider that such agitation necessarily carried with it an imputation of blame?—I would not, so long as they were agitating in a right cause.

5860. Mr. *Gardner.*] But the mind of a person officially engaged in an agitation must, of course, have a considerable bias in favour of the beneficial effects of that agitation?—Of course. I have seen him myself at different times, when I have had occasion to pass by public-houses, in company with workmen there.

5861. Mr. *Biggs.*] You do not think that any alteration by legislative enactment in the mode of carrying on the trade in Hinckley would improve the condition of the working classes there?—I do not.

5862. Mr. *Gardner.*] Sketchley tells us that it is a common thing in Hinckley to give out short work and take full frame rent; does that coincide with your experience?—It does not.

5863. How many manufacturers are there in Hinckley besides yourself?—Five, I think.

5864. Have you any knowlege of their practices?—I am not acquainted with them sufficiently to say whether they do or do not do so; I believe they do not; I think that those who only give out partial work take only part of the rent.

5865. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you acquainted with any middlemen in Hinckley?—I am not.

5866. Are there any there?—Very few; the most I do would be a man setting eight or ten frames; his family would work them principally; perhaps there might be one or two worked by journeymen.

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5867. Are there any middlemen who are employed by manufacturers Leicester who employ people at Hinckley?—Yes.

5868. You are aware of that?—Yes.

5869. Are you aware of their practices?—I am not.

5870. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is it the practice in Hinckley, when trade is slack, to give work out late in the week?—I believe there are cases in which that has been done, but I do not know of any myself; it may have arisen from the circumstance of their not having cotton.

5871. Mr. *Biggs.*] Sketchley is asked, in Question No. 3699, "Is it at all an uncommon circumstance in Hinckley to give out short work and to take full frame rent;" and his answer is, "That is very frequently done." You deny that proposition?—I do; as far as I am concerned, I answer that it certainly is not.

5872. Sir *H. Halford.*] But you answer only for yourself?—I answer only for myself; but I believe it is not the practice.

5873. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know Mr. Woodcock, of Hinckley?—I do; he is a very respectable manufacturer there.

5874. Mr. Sketchley makes the following statement with respect to Mr. Woodcock; he says, "he gave what is termed half work, that is, he allowed a workman 4 *s.* for standing, and out of that he would take half rent"?—I believe he did so for some time, but that is not the case now; I wish, in connexion with his name, to say that there is not a more respectable manufacturer in the trade than Mr. Woodcock.

5875. Mr. *Biggs.*] It was stated by some witnesses from Hinckley that it was the custom to take full rent when the workmen were sick; do you confirm or deny that statement?—I deny it.

5876. You say it is not the custom?—I say it is not my custom.

5877. Mr. *Gardner.*] But besides its not being your custom, we want to know your impression as to its being a general custom?—My impression is that it is not.

5878. Sir *H. Halford.*] But you cannot answer for that?—No; my belief is that it is not; I believe that they would not do it.

5879. Mr. *Gardner.*] Living as you do in the neighbourhood, you must have a strong belief one way or the other?—I have; I do not believe there is a manufacturer who would not meet the workmen in such a case as that.

5880. Sir *H. Halford.*] But with respect to the middleman, you cannot say?—I cannot.

5881. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know a person named Joseph Garrett?—I do not know that I do.

5882. Do you know a Mr. Lee?—I did know him; he is dead.

5883. Mr. *Biggs.*] The witness Sketchley has made a statement to your prejudice to this effect, with respect to the wife of an agricultural labourer; it occurs in his answer to Question No. 3755; he says, "For four weeks during the hard frost, which was at the time the woman was confined, her husband had but two or three days' work during those four weeks. I believe that in the sixth week the woman did one dozen of hose, at 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen; at the time she was going to the warehouse the children were crying for bread; they had nothing in the house, nor a halfpenny to purchase anything with; she promised them a bit of bread when she came back. When she got to the warehouse Mr. Payne asked her what they should do; she told him she was willing to pay the rent by a little a week; that is, the rent she had run back during the time of her confinement; he told her he should stop the 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, and that she must pay him 2 *s.* more the next week." Do you recollect anything in connexion with that?—I think I do; and I think I should be right in saying that she would not pay me 3 *d.* a week for the frame. If you will allow me, I will refer to my book. I had no idea of this until I came here, or I would have been better prepared. I think I shall find that she has not paid me 3 *d.* a week for her frame; she hardly comes in once in three months, and when she does come in she brings in hardly any work; whether she works for any one else or not I cannot say. (*The Witness referred to a book.*) I find nothing brought in by her from the 28th of October 1854, when this book commences, to the 10th February 1855; she then paid 3 *s.* 6 *d.* rent.

5884. Mr.

5884. Mr. *Gardner.*] The statement appears to be, that in the sixth week of her occupation of the frame belonging to you she brought in a dozen of hose; it appears that she had been confined, and that you not only stopped the 3*s.* 6*d.* that she ought to have been paid for that dozen of hose, but that you told her she must pay 2*s.* in addition on the rent account?—I should say that if the woman had been ill I should not think of taking more than 6*d.* a week; I never do; and I would further say, that in this case it would not amount to 3*d.*, if I knew she had been ill; because she does but very little work at any time.

5885. Do you find in your book anything at all with reference to her about that time?—I cannot see any statement of her having paid me more than 1*s.*, and I see one instance in which she paid me 9*d.*; I only took 9*d.* out of her small earnings; her earnings are very small; I should say that if she were to work her time she would get 6*s.* a week; whether she has taken part of the work to anybody else, I can hardly say, but she has paid me a very trifling sum, and done very little, perhaps not more than 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; and I have a notion that she must have been working somewhere else to avoid paying the rent, because I know that some time back she would get 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week though having a family.

5886. Mr. *Biggs.*] To the best of your recollection and knowledge, is the statement which has been made with regard to her true or false?—I should say it must have been a considerably longer time than that, if I took 3*s.* 6*d.*

5887. Mr. *Gardner.*] The statement is, that you not only stopped the 3*s.* 6*d.* for the dozen of hose she worked, but that you also told her she must pay 2*s.* more on account of rent for the six weeks she had been occupied, during which time she had been confined?—I think it is wrong; I believe it to be false. I will, if the Committee will allow me, forward the particulars.—(*The Witness was directed to do so.*)

5888. *Chairman.*] Do I understand you to say that when the parties are ill you take a decreased rent?—I do.

5889. The rent is not stopped, but there is a decrease in the amount charged?—Perhaps, if they were ill one week, I might take the full rent for one week, but not further than one week.

5890. If it were longer than that, there would be a smaller rent taken during the time the operative was ill?—If it were for five or six weeks I should be regulated by the position in life in which the workman was; if I have found him to be a very poor and deserving man I have forgiven him the whole of his rent.

5891. That is a matter of charity; but in your regular trade with the workmen your practice is to take some rent?—Half rent.

5892. Whether they are ill or not?—Yes.

5893. Mr. *Gardner.*] They take the frame, subject to that condition?—Yes; they take it subject to the whole rent.

5894. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you take frame rent in Whitsun week?—Yes.

5895. *Chairman.*] Do you give out work in Whitsun week?—Yes.

5896. Sir *H. Halford.*] But the workmen are engaged with their friendly societies, are they not, at that period?—They may be for one day; I do not see that it ought to take them more.

5897. Mr. *Gardner.*] Here is another case in which your name is mentioned: it is a case in which a man is made to pay full rent for a very small amount of work. Mr. Sketchley says, "I will give you, as an instance, a case of my own: during the four weeks preceding Easter week I worked to Mr. Payne; I worked with a man of the name of Dexter; during that time he was allowed for a four-hose frame and two footers, 24 dozen of socks or half hose, at 1*s.* 3*d.* per dozen; that came to 30*s.* for the three frames; out of that there was 6*s.* for seaming, but for the two footers there were 24 dozen to foot, at 6½*d.* a dozen; so that each of the two footers (and I was one) received, first hand, 6*s.* 6*d.*; out of that I had to pay full expenses, 2*s.* 6*d.*, just the same as though I had earned double the amount." Then he is asked, "Then you had only 3*s.* 6*d.* for yourself?" and he says "4*s.* This Mr. Payne has now originated a new system"?—I will give you, if you please, what Dexter's earnings were. I know he has earned a very great sum. (*The Witness referred to his book.*)

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5898. The statement of Mr. Sketchley refers to four weeks preceding Easter?—On the 31st of March Dexter had three frames; he earned 1 *l.* 15 *s.*

5899. Is that gross?—That is gross.

5900. What were the rent and charges?—Five shillings and five pence in that case. On March the 10th Dexter earned 2 *l.* 7 *s.* 3 *d.*, with 6 *s.* 5 *d.* off.

5901. Leaving how much net?—Two pounds and ten pence.

5902. Was that for one week?—Yes.

5903. Mr. *Biggs.*] For three frames?—Yes. On the 17th, Dexter earned 1 *l.* 15 *s.*, with 5 *s.* 5 *d.* off; on the 24th, 2 *l.* 6 *s.* 3 *d.*, with 6 *s.* 4 *d.* off; on the 31st, 1 *l.* 15 *s.*, with 5 *s.* 5 *d.* off. If I were to go back to a period before that, I should find that he earned much more; trade was exceedingly bad then.

5904. Will you be kind enough to read to yourself the statement made by Mr. Sketchley, and tell me whether it is inaccurate or not; and if it is, in what particular it is inaccurate? (*The Minutes of the Evidence referred to are handed to the Witness.*)—He states that on the 10th of March they only had 24 dozens, and I say they had 42.

5905. Mr. *Mundy.*] Is the rate right, 1 *s.* 3 *d.* per dozen?—No, March 10th, 42 dozens at 1 *s.* 1½ *d.*; March 17th, 28 dozens at 1 *s.* 3 *d.*; 24th March, 37 dozens at 1 *s.* 3 *d.*; and on the 31st March, 28 dozens at 1 *s.* 3 *d.*

5906. Mr. *Biggs.*] Then the fact is that his statement is not correct in a single instance?—It is not.

5907. The conclusion to which Sketchley came in this statement, that he received 6 *s.* 6 *d.*, and that out of that he had to pay full expenses, just the same as though he had earned double the amount, is incorrect?—I can say nothing about what he received, because I only paid the man Dexter; I can tell you what he received; I cannot tell you what the other man received; he might only do a very small portion of the quantity; the other man would do a great deal more.

5908. Mr. *Mundy.*] They worked together, did they?—I let to a man three frames; he works the legger himself, and it appears to me that he sets one of them to a man named Sketchley, though I was not aware of that till now; and this Sketchley, it is true, might only do so small a quantity of work; but if he only did that, the other man must have done a great deal more than he; Dexter informs me that one of the footers have done 32 dozens of feet in one week, and that Sketchley could have had more if he would have done it, but was idle and would not.

5909. Mr. *Gardner.*] Was there work enough given out to occupy them both fully?—Yes; they might have had twice the quantity, if they would, by paying a little extra.

5910. Mr. *Mundy.*] Can you tell us the amount of their earnings?—I have given you the gross amount.

5911. He says, "Each of the two footers (and I was one) received first hand 6 *s.* 6 *d.*; out of that I had to pay full expenses, 2 *s.* 6 *d.*, just the same as though I had earned double the amount." Do you say that that is incorrect?—He has always had plenty of work; I can say that.

5912. Mr. *Gardner.*] Sketchley brings forward this case as one in which he was personally concerned, in which he did not receive enough work, and could have earned a great deal more if work had been given out to him, but had to pay full rent?—I am satisfied he had plenty of work if he would have done it.

5913. Then, in all its main features, you say this statement is inaccurate?—I do.

5914. You say it is false?—It is.

5915. There is also another statement made with respect to yourself; Mr. Sketchley says, "This Mr. Payne has now originated a new system; he takes the full rent, and in addition compels the workman to pay a per-centage upon the work he has from the warehouse; at the time we were receiving this 24 dozen of half hose for the three frames, we could have done more work; but that was all he would allow us to do for the full rent; and if we took a pound more in, he would take 3 *s.* more out of that pound, as poundage, as he called it, for the favour of receiving so much more work than he thought we ought to receive for the full rent." Have you anything to say as to that statement of

Mr.

Mr. Sketchley's?—It is not true; I should have taken 1 *s.* more; he might have had any quantity of work by allowing me a little extra, and I will state to the Committee why I have been compelled to adopt that plan: other manufacturers have given out but little work, and consequently the workmen themselves have given to their friends a dozen, or two dozen, or three dozen; if it was a dozen of stockings, they would probably get them made for 3 *d.* a dozen, or even more than that, less than I pay.

5916. Mr. *Ingham.*] I understand you to say that persons have taken from you, at the price you have been willing to pay, more work than they could themselves execute, and have got some of it done by other parties, at a lower price than you have paid them, they pocketing the difference in the price which ought to have gone to you, you finding the materials?—It is so; otherwise I should not have adopted any such plan.

5917. Mr. *Biggs.*] Then, when he says "if we took a pound more in, he would take 3 *s.* more out of that pound as poundage," that is not correct?—It is not; I should have taken 1 *s.*; and I will tell you why I should have done that; because during a flat time we have always made more work than during a brisk time, and that proves to me that they have given to their friends some portion of my work to make up; that is my reason for doing it; they always work more in a flat time. I never, but one month, stopped giving out work, and that was 15 years back; I was requested to do so by other manufacturers, and I complied with their request.

5918. Sir *H. Halford.*] Has it ever happened to you when your work-people have been on what is called stint, that they have brought in more work than was comprehended within that stint?—I never have stinted them.

5919. What I understand by stint is, giving them a less quantity of materials than would employ their whole time?—I never have done so, to my knowledge.

5920. Has that never occurred to you?—It may have occurred to me once in seven years when I have not had cotton by me; but it is very rare.

5921. Have you invariably, in the course of your experience, given a full quantity of materials to the workmen?—I have.

5922. Sufficient to employ them their whole time?—I have.

5923. Mr. *Gardner.*] I did not quite understand how you defended your practice of poundage?—During a flat time, when others are giving out very little, I have invariably received more work in.

5924. Mr. *Biggs.*] When you have least wanted it?—Yes; and I have asked them how it is that when I have wanted it, they could not do so much as when I did not want it; but I never could get a satisfactory answer; and therefore, to guard against it, I adopted that plan.

5925. Sir *H. Halford.*] If I understand you rightly, those whom you employ have never been short of work?—They have not been short of work for 15 years. I never stopped but one month during 20 years.

5926. You have always given them as much material as would employ their full time?—Yes, I have.

5927. Mr. *Biggs.*] Will you explain to the Committee the operation of the poundage system?—This, I must tell you, applies to only a very few and not to the bulk of my hands. It applies merely to the class called wide or straight-down hands.

5928. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you mean that your answer applies only to those hands?—No; my answer applies to the whole; the poundage applies only to a certain class, that is the straight-downs, who are the most depressed at the present moment, and perhaps a dozen instances, nay, I think I might say five or six instances, would be the utmost I have ever done it in; it has been only when persons have done an extra quantity of work that I have taken the poundage. I have only taken it upon the excess; not upon the ordinary week's work, but upon the excess of work.

5929. You are speaking now of workmen who are employed on your own premises?—No; in their own houses.

5930. What I understand you to say is this, that you occasionally take in more work than you have occasion for, and that when that happens you charge them a poundage upon that work?—That has never been the case till within, I think, the last month or five weeks; I believe not.

5931. But it has been the case within that time?—Yes, it has; upon the

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straight-down work only, you will bear in mind, not upon the wide-wrought; it has never been applied to them.

5932. Mr. *Biggs.*] Your object in acting upon this principle is to prevent excess and imposition?—That is my object; that the workmen should not bring in more than they do themselves.

5933. You have considered that they have employed others to do work which they themselves have brought in to you?—I am sure they have.

5934. Mr. *Gardner.*] You would object to that only when trade was bad?—When trade is bad. If I could see a profit in it, they might bring in as much as they chose.

5935. Did I not understand you to say that when trade is good these very people cannot be got to do an average quantity of work?—I could produce my book, and show that they do not average so much when trade is good as they do when it is bad.

5936. Sir *H. Halford.*] With reference to the work brought in, is it more than corresponds with the quantity of materials they have received?—No.

5937. They receive the materials from you, do they not?—Yes.

5738. If the work they produce is not more than corresponds with the quantity of material they have received, how do you consider it an excess, or how do you come to the conclusion that the work has been done by other people?—We consider that a wide frame and a footer will earn on an average about a certain sum. If they do more than that, we conclude that they must have given some of the work to some one else being without work.

5939. But you have given them the materials?—Yes, I do not confine them. I must tell you that there is not one in 40 that bring up to their books in the week; not one in 40 will bring up the whole of the material given out to them; many of them will have enough for another week.

5940. You give them as much material as they ask for, though it is more than they can work?—I do.

5941. Mr. *Gardner.*] And you only take a poundage upon the excess?—Yes; upon the excess.

5942. Mr. *Ingham.*] Take any one workman, or a couple of men, you know how much generally each man can produce by his own labour, on his own frame?—Yes.

5943. And when he brings you in more work at the end of the week than his own labour could produce, you conclude that he must have been employing other men to do that work for him?—Yes.

5944. And this being done at a flat time, do you consider that other people who have not got work from their regular employers are induced to work at an under price for your workmen upon your material?—Yes.

5945. And with a view to prevent such an irregular practice, you say, "You must pay me a per-centage upon the excess equivalent to what you are getting from those who work for you at a lower price"?—Yes; but it is not an equivalent; it is merely an acknowledgment. I will give you, if you please, some instances. We consider that a man and his wife or son or daughter will earn in two frames 1 *l.* upon the wide work, and if they bring 2 *l.*, then I should charge them a shilling in the pound upon the excess.

5946. Mr. *Gardner.*] Mr. Sketchley's statement that you have originated a custom of exacting a poundage on what is taken in as a premium for giving out work, conveys a false impression altogether?—It does.

5947. Mr. *Biggs.*] And his statement that you take 3 *s.* in the pound is utterly false?—It is false.

5948. Sir *H. Halford.*] With respect to that practice of yours, there is no misrepresentation in Sketchley's evidence, is there?—I have adopted that plan, instead of reducing them upon the excess.

5949. You have seen Sketchley's evidence, have you not?—Not till this moment.

5950. Do the words which have been read to you contain a misrepresentation?—They do.

5951. In what respect?—Inasmuch as, in the first place, I do not take 3 *s.* in the pound, nor do I take anything, except for excess of work, and then I only take 1 *s.*

5952. Mr.

5952. Mr. *Mundy.*] I see he has qualified his statement by saying that you have altered your system since Easter; is that the case?—If I remember rightly it may be about five weeks.

5953. That is, that you now take 1 *s.* in the pound, whereas formerly you took 3 *s.*?—It is false; I never did that. I believe it is not so long ago as Easter that I commenced with this shilling upon the excess; I never took anything but the 1 *s.*, and that but very lately, and only upon the excess.

5954. Sir *H. Halford.*] Sketchley says that, since Easter, you have altered your system, rather; that you now take 1 *s.* in the pound on all the workman takes in; is that a true statement?—It is false.

5955. In what respect is it false; is it false as regards all that the workman takes in?—It is entirely false, because it is not upon all they take in; it is only on the excess, and it is only in five or six instances that I have done it; I think I might say less even than five or six; it is only in a few instances.

5956. The statement is not entirely false; it is partially true?—It is nineteen-twentieths false. I never saw Sketchley's evidence till I came here.

5957. Look at No. 3771 and the following questions, and read them to yourself? (*The Witness did so.*)—I think you will find with reference to the answer to question No. 3772, that I have shown that the statement is false, inasmuch as in no one week that he names did they do so little as 24 dozen; they had as much work as they could do. It is false as to the 3 *s.* in the pound; as to the 2 *s.* 6 *d.* they have to pay, I know nothing; we only charge 1 *s.* per frame for footers. Sketchley says that I take a shilling in the pound on all that a workman takes in; that is not so. In question No. 3777, Mr. Cheetham asks, "Does he exact that 1 *s.* from all parties who bring work in?" and he says, "Yes." I deny that; it does not apply to more than five or six hands in the whole of the number I employ. If the Committee will allow me, I will show by my book that this man is wrong; I have stated to you what the earnings of the two men were on the 10th of March.

5958. You mean that the witness is wrong as to the amount?—I will show you that he is wrong. On the 10th of March, Dexter brought in 2 *l.* 7 *s.* 3 *d.*, deducting 6 *s.* 5 *d.*; that will show it was only 1 *s.* 5 *d.* poundage; the rent would be 5 *s.* The 17th of March will also show that I have taken but 5 *d.* upon the excess; his amount is 1 *l.* 15 *s.*; the rent is 5 *s.*, and he paid me 5 *s.* 5 *d.*

5959. I would direct your attention to question No. 3781; he is there asked, "Is there a custom of not only taking frame rent, but of exacting a poundage upon what is taken in, as a premium for giving out work?" The answer is, "That is the custom this Mr. Payne has originated; it is a system which he has begun for the last few weeks, or, I may say, three months nearly now." Have you any fault to find with that answer?—Yes; it is not true. I was stating to you that the only sum I took as poundage on the 17th of March was 5 *d.*

5960. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say the statement is not true?—Yes; I say the statement is not true.

5961. The statement with regard to the custom, without entering into the sums?—It is not true.

5962. Do you mean it is not true that there is a custom of not only taking frame rent, but of exacting a poundage upon what is taken in, as a premium for giving out work?—I do; in this case I only took 5 *d.* on the day I have mentioned; they brought in 35 *s.*, and I took 5 *d.* poundage.

5963. I do not understand you as giving a distinct answer in the negative to that question?—It is false; I did not take it upon the amount of work brought in.

5964. But with regard to the question generally; besides the custom of taking frame rent, a poundage has also been exacted as a premium for giving out work?—It is not so; it is only upon the excess, and that excess was 5 *s.*

5965. I do not understand that to be a distinct negative of that question?—I say the statement is false.

5966. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have you any further statement to make to the Committee?—I have not gone through Mr. Sketchley's evidence; I see a great deal of it applies to me. If it had been put into my hands before, I should have been better able to speak with regard to it. I must, however, contradict

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the statement which he makes in answer to question No. 3756, for I never saw Mrs. Farran cry, nor did she in my warehouse. Then in No. 3877, he says, "I commenced this before any others had made a reduction;" such is not the case. I had heard of several instances in which reductions had been made before I adopted this plan.

5967. Have you any further remarks to make about this case of Farran's?—I cannot find that from the 28th of October, the day on which this book was made up, to the 10th of February, she ever brought in any work at all, though she had plenty by her; how much longer I do not know, but from that time she did not bring in; therefore it is a great deal longer time than six weeks, being nearly six months.

5968. How much rent would she have had to pay, provided you had thought proper to take it all?—A shilling a week.

5969. For how many weeks?—Twenty weeks, and it may even have been longer than that.

5970. Then she would owe you at least 1 *l.*?—Yes.

5971. The statement that Mr. Sketchley wishes to convey is, that in the sixth week of her occupation of a frame let by you to her, she came to you with a dozen of hose at 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, and that you stopped that 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, and debited her with 2 *s.* more on account of rent, charging her altogether 5 *s.* 6 *d.* for rent?—It is not true; she only paid me 5 *s.* 6 *d.* in 20 weeks; refer to Question 5883.

5972. You state that the period of time for which she owed you rent was considerably longer?—Yes.

5973. How long?—Five months, certainly; I do not know whether it was more than that or not. I am quite convinced that this woman has not paid 3 *d.* a week for her frame the last 12 months. I am only sorry that I cannot give more particulars as to dates, but I had no idea I should be asked such a question.

5974. It has been stated that trade in Hinckley is in a declining state; what is the character of the machinery employed at Hinckley; is there much new machinery there?—I am not aware that the trade is in a declining state; it is in about as good a state as it has been for some time; in fact, it has been better, until the last few months.

5975. The improved machinery is gradually superseding the old, is it not?—It is.

5976. Do you not attribute to that, in a great measure, the depressed state of the workmen employed on the old machinery?—I must qualify that a little. It is only on a certain class of machinery that there is this amount of depression.

5977. What class?—The wide straight-downs.

5978. Sir *H. Halford.*] From what does that arise?—I presume from the introduction of the circular machinery.

5979. From the competition of better and more rapid machinery?—Yes.

5980. That affects the wrought-hose frames less, does it not?—It does.

5981. The work made upon them being of a different description?—Of a lower class; a cheaper class.

5982. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know a man of the name of Ginns?—I do.

5983. What is he?—Much the same as the other; he will not work when he can live without it; he is a committee-man, and one of those men who endeavour to make the stocking-makers dissatisfied with their masters.

5984. He tells us he is a framework-knitter; has he any other occupation?—None, only what I have stated.

5985. What have you stated?—I have stated that he, perhaps, gets a portion of his living by making the stocking-makers dissatisfied with their employers.

5986. In what capacity does he do that?—As a committee-man.

5987. Is he one of the committee of the trades' union?—Yes, he is.

5988. Do you know a person named Mead, at Hinckley?—I do.

5989. Is he connected in any way with the trade of the place?—No.

5990. Have you any reason to think that his opinion on this subject is worth having, from any practical acquaintance of his own with the trade?—No; he cannot be acquainted with the manufacture of hosiery. He is, I believe, a Scripture

cripture reader, and he may occasionally visit the houses and homes of the bor.

5991. Has he been resident in Hinckley long?—I should think not a year; erhaps seven or eight months.

5992. Are you a ratepayer of Hinckley?—Yes.

5993. Then you know, I suppose, what you pay?—I do, pretty well.

5994. Mr. Mead tells us that the poor rate at present is 2 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound, nd that it is expected that the next rate will be 4 *s.* 2 *d.*; and in reply to this uestion which was put to him, "Do you mean 2 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound in the ourse of the year?" he replies, "2 *s.* 6 *d.* in the quarter, as I understand;" aking a rate of 10 *s.* in the year?—That has not been the case for many years ill the present quarter.

5995. What is the poor rate at Hinckley at present?—The present is a half-rown rate?

5996. *Chairman.*] How much in the pound in the year?—For four years ast, I should say it would not average more than 5 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound per ear.

5997. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it a quarterly rate?—We have had several fifteen-enny ones, and I only remember one twenty-penny one for the year before; nd I think for a year or two before that they would average about 15 *d.*

5998. Mr. Mead's statement is correct as to the last quarter?—Yes.

5999. Mr. *Gardner.*] The last rate was a two-shilling-and-sixpenny quarterly ate?—Yes.

6000. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you connected with the administration of the oor law at Hinckley at all?—I am sorry to say they have put me on as one of he overseers at Hinckley this year.

6001. Are you aware whether it is the practice in the administration of the poor law to give workmen relief who are at the same time in work at all?—I believe it is done.

6002. When their wages are so low, that even though they are employed, they cannot subsist upon them?—It is only when they are infirm that it is done.

6003. They are in that case allowed to receive parochial relief?—When they are aged and infirm, but not otherwise.

6004. That is not the case with respect to able-bodied persons?—Certainly not; the aged and infirm are allowed assistance, but not the able-bodied.

6005. They working at their own houses?—Yes.

6006. Mr. *Gardner.*] Supposing an Act of Parliament, prohibiting stoppages from wages to be passed, what effect, if any, do you think it would have upon the net earnings of the framework-knitters; would it, in your opinion, have a tendency to increase or diminish the amount of their earnings?—I should say they would be decidedly worse off at the year's end than they are under the present system.

6007. Can you explain to the Committee how, in your opinion, they would be worse off?—We will say there are two manufacturers in Hinckley, one of whom shall have machinery and the other not; I am one of them; my neighbour owns machinery; he has, I will suppose, for the sake of argument, 100 machines; those 100 machines shall cost him 1,000 *l.*; the interest upon that we will call 50 *l.*; the wear and tear of the same hundred shall be 100 *l.* a year, making together 150 *l.* I am not a holder or owner of machinery, and consequently have no wear and tear, and no interest of money; I regret to say, that if I went to the stocking-makers in our place holding the machinery of my brother manufacturer, they would, if I made them an offer of from 1 *d.* to 3 *d.* a dozen more money than he gave, bring their work to me, and the real party to whom it ought to go would not have it, as in the case of the woman Farran. I have no hesitation in saying that that woman is now working to another man with my frame, because I have been so lenient. I say that a man owning machinery must have an advantage over a man not owning it, because of the interest of his capital, and the wear and tear of his machinery; and he has his stockings made, in consequence of that, 3 *d.* a dozen we will say less than the other man. If I, as a manufacturer in the same place, holding no machinery, were to go to the hands and say, "I will give you 3 *d.* more than *A.* or *B.* is giving," I should have the work brought to me, and excuses would be made to the owner

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of the machinery for not bringing work in; it would be said "My husband has been ill," or "I have been under the doctor's hands," or "my children have been ill," and so on.

6008. What you mean is, that without the security of rent, a man's frames would be used in making goods for other people?—There is no question of that.

6009. Sir *H. Halford.*] Your supposition is, that rents are entirely done away with?—Yes.

6010. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have not exactly answered my question, because your answer rather goes to what would become of the manufacturers, and you clearly show that the manufacturers would be injured by the legislative abolition of rent; but my question was, what do you think would be the result, if any, upon the wages of the operative?—I think that the operatives would be out of work more frequently than they are at present; that at the year's end they would, from that cause, have earned less than they earn now.

6011. *Chairman.*] Independently of the question of wages, do you not think it would produce a better feeling between the manufacturers and the workmen if there were a change made in the system?—I am not aware that it would; I think not.

6012. Mr. *Gardner.*] If their net earnings were reduced in consequence of the abolition of frame rents, that would not, I suppose, tend to improve the relation subsisting between the masters and workmen?—No.

6013. Mr. *Biggs.*] If it did not raise their wages, the workmen would be disappointed, would they not?—They would.

6014. Have you any further statement that you wish to make to the Committee?—No, I am not prepared with any further statement.

6015. Mr. *Ingham.*] How many hours in the course of a day does a diligent man generally work at his frame?—A diligent man might possibly work at it from 11 to 12 hours if he was anxious to make a very comfortable home.

6016. And upon a narrow frame, with steady work, during that number of hours, how much would he earn at the present prices?—Ten shillings; if he was at work with improved machinery, making wide-wrought, possibly he might earn 1*l.*

6017. Net?—Net; if upon the old machinery, it might be perhaps 10*s.*, or a little over 10*s.*

6018. That is working 12 hours a day?—Yes.

6019. Mr. *Mundy.*] That is upon the wrought hose?—Yes.

6020. Mr. *Ingham.*] Must he always have some assistance from children winding or performing other functions to help him during the whole of the 12 hours?—No.

6021. How long would a child be occupied to keep his father supplied with work for 12 hours in the day?—I can hardly answer that question. I should think perhaps two hours a day, or not as much as that, possibly.

6022. The business of a child is winding, is it not?—If that is the case, the man would earn more than I have stated. A youth of 14 or 16, if he worked the same time, would get nearly as much as a man.

6023. Could a man, by working 12 hours a day in the way you have described, earn the sum you have mentioned without the assistance of any second hand at all?—I should say yes.

6024. He can do all that is required by means of his own hands?—Yes; he would earn that fully.

Martis, 19° die Junii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir Henry Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cheetham.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Ingham.

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Samuel Stone*, called in; and Examined.

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6025. Sir *H. Halford.*] YOU are Clerk to the Borough Magistrates at Leicester?—I am.

6026. You are aware of what is called the Ticket Act, 8 & 9 Victoria, c. 77?—Yes.

6027. Was there any appeal made, with regard to that Act, to the borough magistrates of Leicester?—There was a case of an information laid before the magistrates against manufacturers for the violation of the provisions of that Act, by not giving a ticket.

6028. And upon that the magistrates thought it necessary, did they not, to submit a case for the opinion of counsel?—They did.

6029. Who was the counsel?—Mr. Peacock, an eminent pleader, who now holds some office in the East Indies under Government.

6030. Have you a copy of that case?—I have.

6031. And of the opinion?—I have with me the original case and opinion. (*The Witness handed in the same.*) In the case I divided the persons to whom the Act might or might not apply into five different classes, the first being persons whom I called single hands, that is, persons taking out goods to be worked up by their own hands direct from the warehouse; the second class being the heads of families who took out materials for themselves and the different branches of their families; the third class being master stocking-makers who have shops of frames, and whose workmen are employed in those shops; the fourth class being undertakers or middlemen, employing men to work up the materials, either at the undertaker's factory or at the workman's house, or both; and the fifth class being manufacturers employing men in their factories. The result of Mr. Peacock's opinion was, that the Act applied to the first class, and that a ticket must be given by the manufacturer to the workman, that being strictly within the Interpretation Clause. With respect to the second class, he was of opinion that the Act applied to the head of the family, and that the manufacturer must give a ticket to him, but not to the members of the family who worked with him or under him.

Vide Appendix.

6032. Those two classes are persons who work direct to the warehouse?—Yes. The third class was the master stocking-makers, having shops of frames; as to them, he was of opinion that the manufacturer must give a ticket to the master stocking-maker, but that the master stocking-maker was not required to give a ticket to the man working in his shop, it being doubtful whether a master stocking-maker was a manufacturer within the meaning of the Interpretation Clause, and the materials not being given out of the possession of the workman. You will find that, by the Interpretation Clause, a master is defined to be a person who furnishes the materials to be wrought into hosiery goods, to be sold or disposed of on his own account. Mr. Peacock was of opinion that the master stocking-maker did not come within that clause; at all events, that it was doubtful whether he did come within the meaning of the term "manufacturer," or not.

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6033. It was considered that there was no agreement between the manufacturer and the workman?—That there was no agreement between the manufacturer and the workman; the fourth class were the persons I have called undertakers or middlemen, employing men to work for them at the undertaker's factory, or at the workmen's houses; he thought it was doubtful whether a manufacturer was required to give a ticket, even to the undertaker, he not being a workman, and that the undertaker need not give tickets to men working in his factory, the materials not being given out to them. With respect to the fifth class, that of a manufacturer employing men in his own factory, he was of opinion that the Act did not apply, the materials not being given out within the meaning of the Act of Parliament, but remaining still in the legal possession of the manufacturer, so as to constitute larceny if taken away by a workman from the shop or factory. That is the short substance of Mr. Peacock's opinion.

6034. Practically, what was the result of that case and opinion?—Practically, I never heard anything more of the Ticket Act. It was found not to apply to a variety of persons to whom the workmen were anxious it should apply.

6035. The design and object of the Act was, was it not, to give to a workman a security that he should obtain the price paid at the warehouse?—That I cannot say. He was to know the price he was to receive.

6036. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is the only part of the Act which is practicable applicable to two classes out of five?—Yes.

6037. And those the small classes?—Yes.

6038. Sir *H. Halford.*] Those are the classes who work through middlemen?—Persons who work direct to the manufacturer, and not in his factory.

6039. Those persons are entitled to the ticket?—Yes.

6040. But those who work through the intervention of a bagman or undertaker, or whatever he is called, have no claim for a ticket?—No; they have no claim on the manufacturer for a ticket, and none on their own employer, if they work in a shop or factory.

6041. So that they have no security for any knowledge of the price paid at the warehouse?—Only a knowledge of their own bargain.

6042. That bargain being made with the middleman, and not with the manufacturer?—Precisely. I may state that this opinion was communicated to the county magistrates, and the county magistrates, under the advice of Mr. Macaulay, their clerk, acted on this case and opinion.

6043. And the consequence has been that the Ticket Act has remained, to a great extent, a dead letter?—I think that, practically, it is almost inoperative. I think there is one person who gives out tickets.

6044. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have many cases of disputes in Leicester between the employers and the employed come to your knowledge?—Complaints come occasionally before the magistrates; but I do not know that a great many do. Complaints certainly do from time to time arise; sometimes by a master against a stocking-maker for neglecting to bring in materials, and sometimes by the stocking-maker against the master for not having paid his wages.

6045. Are you aware that the workmen do, independently of any legislation, understand the bargain into which they enter with the middlemen?—I think they understand the price they are to receive, and the price their own master receives, and that they allow to the middleman a certain sum for his trouble in taking out the materials, taking them in, finding frame and warehouse room, and so on; I believe they are quite aware that practically they receive the warehouse price, minus certain deductions or allowances, which are the subject-matter of agreement between the middleman and the persons in his employ.

6046. Sir *H. Halford.*] If they have no security that they will know what the warehouse price is, how can they be sure that they receive it?—I believe that the warehouse price is well known to the workmen.

6047. Was it not apparently the intention of the Act to provide them with that security?—I should have said not. I should not have said, reading the Ticket Act, that the persons employing these men must, under all circumstances, give the same price as they themselves receive; if so, what are they to live upon?

6048. What do you conceive to have been the meaning of it?—That a workman may know what work he has to perform for a certain amount of money. That seems to me to have been the object of the Act. The work is defined, the

wages

wages are defined, and so are the materials that the workman has to work up. I imagined that the object in view was that the ticket should be evidence of the contract between the two parties, but not of a contract between the master and another person.

6040. If there is a recognised stoppage from wages in order to the remuneration of the middleman, does not that imply that the workman is entitled to receive the warehouse price minus that stoppage?—I believe that is the understanding. I believe they do receive the warehouse price, minus what are called the frame rents and charges.

6050. But if he has no security for information as to the warehouse price, how can he be certain of receiving it?—He cannot, of course, be sure.

6051. Then the object of the Ticket Act, whatever it was, appears to have been defeated?—If such were the object, it is not carried out by the words or spirit of the Act.

6052. Supposing the Act to be inoperative, the object of it must be defeated?—Whatever the object was it was defeated, because the Act itself is in disuse.

6053. Mr. *Gardner.*] Would you say, from your experience in the hosiery trade, that an Act like this, if it would technically hold water, is necessary?—I should say not. If it is necessary at all, it should not be in so inconvenient a form as is prescribed by this Act of Parliament; for by it every time a workman receives a pound of worsted he must have a new ticket, containing a great many minute particulars; therefore the complication of it would be sure to lead to its disuse.

6054. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you understand that the neglect to carry out the provisions of the Act of Parliament arises from the inconvenience of those provisions, and not from the principle of the Act?—Workmen find after two or three weeks that they derive no benefit from it, and I know that in many instances they have refused to take a ticket, saying it was useless.

6055. Do you think there is any sound objection to the principle of the Act?—I think there is no sound objection to every contract being in writing, if you so think fit to make it; but I think there is a great objection to any legislative interference with the agreement between your master and the person who employs your master. If I work with you, I make my contract with you; if you work for another person you make your contract with him, and each looks to his own interest.

6056. The workman being subject to a direct stoppage from wages to remunerate the undertaker, his agreement is, in point of fact, with the manufacturer, is it not?—No, it is with his own master; he agrees to receive a certain price, which he understands and which he has the means of knowing to be the price. It is generally known what wages are paid at particular warehouses, and then he agrees to a certain amount of stoppage from that price.

6057. Is the middleman, in addition to the time deducted from his wages by stoppage, entitled to a further remuneration in the difference between the price paid to him at the warehouse and the price paid by him to the workman?—He would be if he made his bargain so, but in practice the middlemen give the warehouse price, and make their own charge of 3*s.* 6*d.* or whatever it may be, according to the kind of frame they may have.

6058. Was not the object of the Act, to provide a security that such should be the practice?—I should not have said so; I was not aware that that was the object of the Act.

6059. What do you conceive the object of the Act to have been?—To prevent disputes between the masters and the employed, so that they might know what the nature of the bargain was between them.

6060. To furnish a written agreement?—To furnish a written agreement.

6061. Mr. *Gardner.*] From your experience of these matters, would you say that a workman is not in a position fully to understand the nature of his bargain, and to make his own contract, like any other man, without any special legislation on the subject?—I should say he was in a position to understand the nature of his bargain, and to make his contract the same as any other servant. Whether the bargain he makes is beneficial to himself or not, must depend upon the state of trade.

6062. There is nothing in the relation subsisting between the workman and the middleman in the Leicester trade, to make any special legislation necessary to meet that particular case?—I am not aware of anything; cases of hardship

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and oppression occasionally come before the magistrates, but the great source of complaint has not been the amount of wages, but the amount of charges, in cases in which partial work has been given out by the master, the master having made perhaps a stoppage of the full charges.

6063. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In those cases, do the magistrates exercise any jurisdiction?—They have frequently made a recommendation.

6064. Have they refused to enforce what they deemed to be an extortionate deduction?—Generally speaking their recommendation has been accepted. If it were clearly established that the wages amount to a certain sum, and that the master had actually agreed for charges at 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, the magistrates would not strictly speaking have any power to refuse to adjudicate upon the question, and to award the balance; but in practice, they would make a recommendation where such appeared to be the case, and that recommendation would generally speaking be acted on.

6065. You speak of a case in which it was proved that the agreement was 3*s.* 6*d.* a week; was that a special agreement?—I am not speaking of any particular case.

6066. Did the magistrates accept the proof that the custom of the shop was to make these charges that were complained of, or did they require proof of a specific agreement?—I never knew of a case before the magistrates in which the workman did not agree as to what the amount of charges was, supposing the man had been in full employ.

6067. From such cases your impression is that both master and workman invariably know the amount of deductions to be made?—Yes; and the disputes which have arisen have been in cases in which the workman has not had full employment, or where, perhaps, he has been prevented by sickness from performing his work; though more frequently it has been where he has not had full employment.

6068–9. Under those circumstances did not the magistrates say, "We disapprove of the deduction; we think it unreasonable"?—I cannot say they stated it in those terms.

6070. Would they not have been legally justified in doing so?—I think not. If it were proved that there was an actual contract on each side, the Court of Queen's Bench having held that these charges are a lawful deduction, I think the magistrates must award the balance.

6071. In those cases which you know of, was it proved that the workmen agreed to the whole deduction of rent, though they only had partial work?—I do not think anything is said when the men are engaged. I think they take the work with the understanding that so much a week will be deducted for rent and charges.

6072. The magistrates must have inquired, must they not, whether the custom of the trade justified that?—The man himself would not dispute it when he came before you. He would say, "The charges are 3*s.* 6*d.*, but I think it is hard that the full amount should be taken when I had only half work."

6073. Would the agreement between the two parties include that deduction?—Not in terms; but it would be understood to be 3*s.* 6*d.* a week. I do not think that they ever bargain expressly for any less payment in the case of partial work.

6074. Then it must be proved to the magistrates, must it not, that it is the custom of the shop where these men work to have full charges deducted?—No; the magistrates would only require proof of the contract between the man and his master, and take the circumstances of the case into consideration, and make a recommendation accordingly. If I were to go into a shop, I should engage to work for a certain amount of wages, and to be subject to certain charges; the dispute arises when I leave my master's employment. Some question arises as to what I ought to receive, and then the workman will sometimes say, "Work sufficient only to occupy me three or four days was given out, and I think that under those circumstances it is unjust to take from me full charges." In such a case as that the magistrates would recommend an equitable adjustment.]

6075. Would not the magistrates feel justified in saying, "Unless an agreement is proved that the workman is to have these deductions made when he is only partially employed, we cannot allow them"?—I should say they would not be legally justified in coming to such a decision. When you go to a shop,

or

or to a master, you agree what your wages and deductions shall be; that is the contract between the parties, and the magistrates have no power to vary the terms of it.

6076. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you say a shop, do you mean the shop of a middleman?—Yes.

6077. So that the workman stands in no relation to the manufacturer?—No, not at all.

6078. But the middleman exacts the payment by stoppages from wages from the workman, expressly under the plea that he brings out the materials, and takes in the goods when manufactured?—Yes.

6079. He is paid for doing that, that representing his remuneration?—Yes.

6080. In addition to that, do you think he is entitled to make a separate contract with the workman involving a further gain to him, from the difference in the price received by him from the warehouse, and the price paid by him to the workman?—When you say "entitled," I would say that all these matters must be the subject of arrangement between master and man. If a master were to say to a workman, "I will give you 6 *d.* a dozen less than the warehouse price," there is no law to prevent that; and the magistrates would have to act upon that agreement, without reference to the price at the warehouse.

6081. But these payments being recovered by stoppages from wages, does not that give to the middleman an opportunity of making an exorbitant profit?—If there be a great demand for labour, a master will not be able to make an exorbitant profit. If there be a redundancy of labour, the master will take advantage of it, and will sometimes oppress his men under those circumstances.

6082. *Chairman.*] The magistrates have no jurisdiction to interfere between master and man, unless there is a contract?—No.

6083. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The understood or implied contract to which you have alluded is silent upon the subject of full and partial employment, is it not?—Yes; the wages are so much per dozen, and the stoppages are so much per week.

6084. That is the contract, and that contract is silent upon the subject of full or partial employment?—Yes. If I take a house at 3 *s.* a week, I may either live in it or not, and if I do not occupy it, I still pay rent for it. So here, if a man takes a frame he has to pay full rent for it, unless he has previously stipulated that there shall be an allowance in case of short work, which is not the custom.

6085. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You think there is an analogy between a house and a frame?—I think there is a contract in each case.

6086. Sir *H. Halford.*] I understand the position of a middleman to be this, he makes his profit entirely out of the wages of the workman; he makes no profit upon the sale of the goods?—None at all; the goods do not belong to him.

6087. Seeing that his profits are made in that manner, is there not great danger that he will depress trade by getting his goods made at a very low price, with a view of so securing a profit to himself?—No doubt he will be anxious, if he can make a profit at all, to carry on business with a small profit, rather than get nothing.

6088. Would not the effect of that be to depress wages and the trade generally?—That is the case with every manufacturer. If he makes more goods than there is a demand for, the effect necessarily is for a time to depress trade.

6089. Does the same relation subsist in any other manufacture?—I am told it exists in the ribbon trade.

6090. But you are not aware that it exists in any other?—I am told it exists in the ribbon trade.

6091. Is not the depression to which the workmen are subject necessarily connected with this mode of carrying on the manufacture?—I should say not.

6092. *Chairman.*] The cases in which the magistrates have recommended a particular course to be taken between the manufacturers and the workmen, are cases in which there has been no contract between them, are they not?—No written contract. It is not necessary that a contract should be in writing to constitute a valid bargain. If you hire a menial servant, you do not reduce to writing the agreement you make with him, but it is nevertheless enforceable in a court of law.

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6093. Are there not many cases in which there is no contract made between the parties?—I am not aware of any case in which a man enters and works in a shop without knowing what the charges of the shop are.

6094. Until he takes in his work?—When he goes to the shop, he knows what charges will be made. It is notorious in the town what the charges are which are made in every shop.

6095. Your knowledge extends only to the town of Leicester; you are not so well acquainted with the villages?—No.

6096. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do disputes between masters and servants frequently come before the magistrates?—No.

6097. When they do, the magistrates do not feel themselves competent to adjudicate upon them, but only to recommend. Is not that the case?—I happen to be their clerk, and that is the opinion I should give to them professionally; that if the contract is proved to their satisfaction on both sides, they are bound by law to award the amount proved to be due, but under such circumstances they would, as a matter of fairness and justice to the workman, recommend in a case in which he had not had full work, or in which he had been prevented by sickness from working, that some allowance should be made.

6098. The fact however is, that it is at the option of the master to do as he pleases?—Yes; but such a recommendation by the magistrates would be generally acted upon, though it could not be insisted on.

6099. Mr. *Gardner.*] When a man has agreed to pay a certain rent per week for a frame, and when he has arranged with a middleman as to the deductions to be made from his wages, he falls sick during part of the week, or for other reasons is not fully employed, he is not legally relieved from the payment of his frame rent?—He is not.

6100. Should you say that equitably he ought to be relieved?—I should say that equitably he ought to be relieved from a portion of his charges, supposing him to be incapable of working. I think it would be oppressive to insist on full charges if a man has not had an opportunity of earning his full wages.

6101. It operates merely, in fact, as a reduction of wages, does it not?—Yes.

6102. Should you, as a practical man, say it is desirable to pass a special Act of Parliament to meet such a case?—I think as a general principle it is very unwise to interfere between master and man.

6103. Do you see any exceptional case here to justify or to excuse the violation of that principle?—I am not aware of anything that would not properly and safely regulate itself. In my opinion, all these matters depend upon the demand that there is for labour; when there is a great demand, a man will insist on having good wages, and when the demand is small, the master will, of course, reduce them.

6104. When trade is good, a middleman would not have the power, even if he had the will, to make these oppressive charges?—Certainly not, when times are good.

6105. They merely amount, in point of fact, to a reduction of wages?—Yes.

6106. Sir *H. Halford.*] You say you object to all interference between masters and workmen?—No; I did not say that I object to all interference; what I said was, that as a general principle I objected to it.

6107. Is the Ticket Act the only Act relating to the hosiery manufacture which was passed about the same period?—There was one Act passed about two years before.

6108. Was that the Act of 6 & 7 Vict., c. 40?—Yes.

6109. That Act contains, does it not, some very stringent provisions with regard to the property of employers in frames and materials, with respect to the recovery of them, when in the possession of their workmen?—It contains certain provisions; I am not aware that they are unusually stringent or severe.

6110. Does it not inflict very heavy penalties upon the workmen?—The Act to which you refer was a repeal of the former Act which related to woollen manufactures, and which was found to be inapplicable to the mode in which the hosiery trade was carried on in Leicester; but if you refer to the penalties contained

ontained in the Act of 6 & 7 Victoria, you will not find that they are more vere than those which are contained in the Act it was intended to repeal; is adapted to the then state of the manufacture.

6111. But the passing of that Act was a very considerable interference, was not, by the Legislature as between masters and workmen on the side of the nasters?—And also for the benefit of the workmen. You will find if you read nat Act, that although a master is enabled to bring his workman before the nagistrates for neglecting to bring in his materials, or for the violation of his ontract, it gives an equally summary remedy against the manufacturer for the ecovery of wages due to his workman, which remedy, in the opinion of Lord ampbell, did not exist under the old Act.

6112. The general principle is, that there is a power of recovering wages by ummary process?—The power of recovering wages before magistrates is not o extensive as generally supposed. According to the decisions of the Court of ueen's Bench, magistrates have no jurisdiction under the Acts relating to nasters and servants, unless you can show that the servant was exclusively n the employ of the master, and that his whole time was given up to the ervice of the master. If you do not prove those two facts, the workman is a ontractor and not a servant.

6113. In point of fact, part of the object of this Act was to give power to a orkman to recover his wages by summary process?—Yes.

6114. Is not that object to a great extent defeated by the indefinite power hich is exercised of making stoppages from wages for rent, and various other harges?—I think not; I think the power is not indefinite, because according o my understanding of the way in which trade is carried on, the contract is ertain. There is no doubt as to what the contract is; the only question is hether it is harshly carried into effect or not.

6115. How is the contract certain?—I cannot recollect a case in which master nd man disagreed as to what the charges were.

6116. Is there any written evidence, the Ticket Act being inoperative?—o; generally speaking, there is no dispute the first week; the workmen will ontinue to work for several weeks; the charges would be deducted from week o week, and you would arrive at what the bargain originally was.

6117. May we understand the object of the Ticket Act to have been to give omething like certainty to the contract?—Not the Ticket Act.

6118. What do you suppose to have been the object of it if that was not?—supposed the object to be, that a man might know not only what his wages were, but the kind of work he was to be employed on; it enters into a variety of particulars, the number of jacks in the web, the number of narrowings, and so on.

6119. All that being part of the contract?—All that being part of the contract, I supposed the object was that he might know how many narrowings there were to be in the leg, toe, and heel, whether dumps or clocks, weight and so on, for a given amount of wages.

6120. Does not the complication of all that show the necessity for a written statement?—If you pass a law that is complicated, it will never be carried out; the more intricate it is, the more difficult it will be to carry it into effect; and both masters and men will become dissatisfied with machinery which they do not find produces to them any good result. If a workman finds that he does not get more money with a ticket than he gets without one, he will cease to ask for one, or to care about it.

6121. The complication of the law being, as you say, great, is there not, therefore, more necessity for an exact definition of it?—I am not aware that there is any difficulty in a workman knowing the nature of the work he has to perform without the complication of a ticket.

6122. Is not the complication in the work itself rather than in the form of the ticket?—The stocking-makers know very well what work they are to perform for certain wages.

6123-4. Mr. *Gardner*.] They do not require an Act of Parliament to regulate that?—No. Supposing such an Act were passed as has been once or twice proposed, to do away with all stoppages, and requiring that net wages shall be paid, without any deductions, for rent and shop charges, my opinion is that in a fortnight that Act would be as inoperative as the Ticket Act; because, unless you render a contract for rent and charges illegal, it will only involve two sets of

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accounts instead of one, on the part of the master stocking-maker or undertaker. If a master stocking-maker pays you in coin the amount of your wages, he may, immediately the coin has reached your hand, insist on your paying what you owe him for rent and charges, that contract being valid in law and not being attempted to be invalidated by the Act which has been proposed.

6125. You are referring now to a Bill that has been before Parliament?—Yes.

6126. Are you aware of the precise object of that Bill?—I understand the object of the Bill to be, that you are to pay net wages, without deduction for rent or charges; that would not carry out the object intended, but would merely complicate the mode of keeping accounts. If I showed that the coin reached your hand, you might pay me your rent and charges with the other hand immediately.

6127. Was not the object of that Bill simply to bring the practice of stoppages from wages within the prohibitions of the Truck Act?—Yes; it would bring it within the prohibitions of the Truck Act; but it does not go so far as the Truck Act in one respect. If you were to say, "You shall have no mode of recovering frame rent and shop charges," and that to receive them shall be unlawful, you might carry out your Act of Parliament; but if you merely say, "You shall not deduct rent and charges from wages, but it shall be lawful to charge rent and to make these shop charges," you merely complicate the mode of keeping accounts; you do not accomplish the end you have in view, because I might lawfully pay you with one hand, and ask you immediately to pay my son, or some other person, the rent and charges due from you to me.

6128. Does not that apply to the practice of Truck with regard to the payment of wages in provisions?—No; under the Truck Act no action can be brought by a master for any goods supplied by him to his workmen. There would be an analogy between the two cases if you made a contract for the payment of frame rent and charges illegal, but not otherwise.

6129. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are you aware that in many cases the Truck Act is evaded?—No doubt it is; it is very little practised in Leicester.

6130. Sir *H. Halford.*] Was it not at one time a general opinion that the stoppage from wages in the hosiery trade was a violation of the Truck Act?—That was the opinion of some persons; I was of opinion that it was not; I also took the opinion of Mr. Justice Crompton, then at the bar, who gave it as his opinion that it was merely a mode of ascertaining wages.

6131. That became the subject of a trial in the Court of Queen's Bench, did it not?—It did.

6132. Are you aware of the judgment pronounced by Lord Denman upon that occasion?—The judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench as pronounced by Lord Denman was, that it was not any interference with the Truck Act.

6133. In that case, is it not the fact that all question of excess in the amount of the charge was left out of the case?—I do not recollect whether that was the case or not; that would not have formed any part of the consideration of the judges. The view of the court was, that the course of dealing between the parties was, that the workman was to receive a certain amount of wages and the master a certain amount of charges, that the balance constituted the wages, and that if the master paid that balance he conformed to the Truck Act.

6134. Are you aware that Lord Denman repeatedly affirmed, in the course of his judgment, and as the foundation of that judgment, that there was no excess alleged in the case submitted to the court?—I will not say that he did not refer to it; it is some years since I read the judgment.

6135. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to say that, in your opinion, no law could bring about *bonâ fide* that system of net contract which was the object of the Honourable Member's Bill?—I think that no law could prevent the adoption of a course, the effect of which would be to render any such Bill inoperative the moment it passed.

6136. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Was not the question which was raised in the case to which you have referred a question with reference to the whole of the deductions that were taken off?—Yes; it was the case of a master stocking-maker or middleman, who charged for frame rent and shop charges.

6137. The gross amount of the earnings of the workman being 2 *l.* 1 *s.* 8 *d.* and 14 *s.* 0 ½ *d.* being deducted?—Yes.

6138. And the action was brought to recover the 14 *s.* 0 ½ *d.*?—Yes.

6139. The decision of the Court of Queen's Bench was that the stoppages were

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re according to the usage of the trade?—The decision was that the sum to nich the workman was entitled, after making the deductions agreed to be ade, constituted the wages within the meaning of the Truck Act; and that if e master paid that sum, which I call the balance between the two, he con-rmed to the Truck Act.

6140. Mr. *Gardner.*] And that is the law which is acted upon at present?—Yes.

Mr. *Robert Ratcliffe*, called in; and Examined.

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6141. Mr. *Cheetham.*] YOU reside at Loughborough?—Yes.

6142. How long have you been a master hosier?—I have been a manu-acturer since my apprenticeship, which was on the 17th December 1798; and nat you will find is 56 years and a half ago.

6143. So that probably you are almost the oldest gentleman engaged in the rade?—I believe I am about the oldest in the trade.

6144. How many frames have you?—I have 129 at this time.

6145. Are they all your own?—They are all my own.

6146. Do you employ any independent frames?—Thirteen.

6147. Is it your custom to take in the work yourself direct from the work-nen?—I have been accustomed to be at the counter taking in every Saturday, xcept two or three, for 56 years and a half, besides taking in other days

6148. I believe that in the course of your business you seldom have had ccasion to employ middlemen at all?—I have had very little work from middle-nen, very seldom; perhaps not more than once in two or three years; and he work is of a peculiar class when it is so.

6149. What deductions are you in the habit of making from the wages of our workmen when you settle with them?—Nothing but frame rent; legiti-nate frame rent, as I conceive, such as I have known for these 56 years and a nalf, and such as I believe has been the custom for generations before.

6150. Can you state to the Committee what your charges per week for rent are?—I can state what my charge is for frame rent very clearly; and I can state also the original cost of the frames.

6151. Confine yourself now, if you please, to the frame rent; how much per week do you deduct from the workmen?—I charge 9 *d.* a week for frames under 30 gauges; that is the charge with us at Loughborough; we are very much like the Nottingham trade; it is principally twenty-fours and under thirties.

6152. For those you charge 9 *d.*; what do you charge for the 40-gauge frames?—From 30 up to 40 gauges inclusive, 1 *s.*

6153. How much above 40?—Forty-twos generally thirteen pence, and forty-fours, fourteen pence.

6154. Do the workmen, when you engage them, know that these are your charges?—They know quite well; for when they come to take a frame they never ask me what is the rent.

6155. Are we to understand that these have been your charges, during the time you have been in business?—Ever since I have been in business; they have been always fixed and unalterable.

6156. How do you deal with a workman who brings in bad work; do you make any abatements for that?—I have abatements, but they are very small.

6157. Can you give me the amount?—I can; I wrote this out last year (*referring to a paper*). I made preparation to come here last year.

6158. During the last two years, what have you deducted?—The last two years, ending 1854, 5 *s.* 1½ *d.* in 13 cases.

6159. Do you mean to say that during the whole of the last two years, you have deducted not more than 5 *s.* 1½ *d.* for bad work?—Yes, for those last two years, ending 1854; and I can explain every farthing of it.

6160. Beyond the deduction for rent, and this 5 *s.* 1½ *d.*, you have no other deductions?—No others.

6161. Do your workmen make any complaint against the charge which you make to them for frame rent?—No.

6162. Did they complain of the deduction of 5 *s.* 1½ *d.* for bad work?—No, they did not complain, for they well knew that I paid considerably more; in

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one case, where I deducted a halfpenny a pair, I paid a girl named Sarah Thompson three half pence a pair for mending.

6163. The work was not properly done, and you deducted a halfpenny a pair?—Yes.

6164. And you paid the girl 1½ *d.* a pair?—Yes.

6165. So notwithstanding the deduction which you made from the workman, you were a loser?—I was a loser; I will hand you the list if you please, with every name and circumstance stated.

6166. Is the reason why your workmen do not complain about this deduction for rent, because you keep your frames fully employed?—My workmen are fully aware of the great expense of framesmithing; my workmen live among the framesmiths.

6167. Is it the fact that you keep your frames fully employed?—When I employ a frame, I generally keep it fully employed.

6168. Nearly all the year?—Yes.

6169. Supposing a frame not to be fully employed, how do you deal with your workman as to the question of rent?—They are always fully employed; but sometimes it occurs that a man is leaving me, and has only done half a week's work, and then I should take half a week's rent, but that does not occur once in a thousand times.

6170. But if such a case did occur, you would not deduct more than a fair proportion of the rent?—If a man had not a full quantity of material to work, I should not take full rent; it would be against my conscience and principle to do so.

6171. Supposing a man to be sick, what would you do in such a case?—If I ascertained that the man really was sick, and I found that I was not being imposed on, I should deduct a proportion of the rent, but I should make inquiry first. If I found the man really was sick, I should not take the full rent from him.

6172. Is it the fact that sometimes you are defrauded by statements made of sickness when no sickness really exists?—Very much. I will read you the particulars of a case of that kind, if you please. Here is a case with regard to a man of Sheepshed, on the 7th of August 1852; this man, William Harris, of Sheepshed, went out to harvest, and when he came home he sent me word that he was very lame, and that he could not work; I allowed him 23 weeks' rent upon two frames; the two frames were 2 *s.* 7 *d.* a week. One frame was 30 inches wide, and made four ribbed stockings at once, for which I charged him 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a week; the other his daughter worked, a footer. I gave up to that man 23 weeks' rent, at 2 *s.* 7 *d.*, which amounts to 59 *s.* 5 *d.* Afterwards I found out that the man had committed a fraud upon me; he did very little work to me, and cheated me out of further rent to the amount of 11 *s.* 11 *d.*; of course I was compelled to take his frames from him. Now I wish to tell the Committee that I had just immediately before paid the framesmiths, net, 12 *l.* 8 *s.* for the repair of these frames, though he had cheated me out of this rent.

6173. With respect to the deductions to which I have referred, and with respect to the taking of full rent when there is only partial employment given out, and also taking full rent in time of sickness, you are speaking of your own business only; can you speak of any such practices prevailing in Loughborough?—I can say a little respecting some others, but I cannot speak so perfectly as if it were my own case; I court the severest inquiry as regards myself.

6174. With regard to a young hand working on a frame, would you deduct the full shilling a week rent?—Yes, I should; we could only have one certain regular fixed rent for every frame, or we should be thrown into endless disorder and confusion.

6175. Do you consider that a young hand does more damage to a frame than an experienced hand does?—Yes; young hands go first into a 24-gauge frame, at 9 *d.* a week; they seldom step into a 30-gauge frame at first.

6176. Suppose the same sum is deducted from them as is deducted in the case of able-bodied workmen, they being more likely to injure the frame, you think that is reasonable?—The old stocking frame is what I principally have; that is the old 15 and 16 inch stocking frame; that was before these new inventions were ever thought of.

6177. Do you think you could have a varying rate of rent for different ages?—If

If you were to attempt to do that, it would lead to all sorts of disorder and ibittered disputes.

6178. Mr. *Gardner.*] You would not know what your goods were costing u in such a case?—No, it would be impossible.

6179. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it your opinion that these frame rents, as between e workmen and the manufacturer, (take your own case, for instance,) could safely abolished by Act of Parliament?—I have thought of it many years, ing an old man, and a practical man; I do not conceive that there is any ieme that possibly could be devised so just between the manufacturer and e workman. We must have a remuneration for the original cost of our imes, for the wear and tear of them, and so forth; and they are not a desirle property, as I can show you.

6180. When you say you do not know of any other scheme so just, you ean to say so just as the system at present adopted, do you not?—Yes; so st as the present system, which has been carried out ever since I have been the business.

6181. You mean if the system is carried out equitably, and upon the prinples upon which you conduct it in your own case?—Yes.

6182. You do not defend cases of full rent being taken for only partial emoyment, or rent being deducted in time of sickness, do you?—I repudiate at system; it is quite contrary to my practice.

6183. But when the system is carried out, as you say it is carried out in your vn business, you conceive that no better scheme could be adopted than the ie at present existing?—I do; and men who have been working for me from) to 40 years tell me the same thing.

6184. There have been disputes between you and your workmen occasionally garding wages, have there not?—Yes; the most peculiar dispute, I remember, as a 14 weeks' turn out; that ended 13th September 1819. This (*producing paper*) is the first statement I beg to hand you; the late Mr. Joseph Paget and yself were the two men that helped to make it.

6185. Was that dispute or turn-out that you refer to connected with the iestion of wages only?—It was this: at that time things were in a depressed ate; the workmen wished for an advance of wages, and in order to get that iey made a struggle, and then turned out; that was all over the three counties, think, to the best of my recollection.

6186. Did they upon that occasion make the subject of frame rent a cause of rievance between you and them?—There was no agitation at that time upon ie subject of frame rents, and none was ever thought of.

6187. There was no demand for their abolition made at that time by your orkmen?—No; all they wanted was an advance of wages, and that was settled Nottingham.

6188. Sir *H. Halford*] When was that?—September 13th, 1819. Messrs. aget and myself had, at Loughborough, long before that statement was made, iven the men tickets. I gave the men tickets long before that containing every ttle iota and every particular as to their work, as I shall be able to explain to ie Committee, if questioned; the Ticket Act never concerned me.

6189. Can you give to the Committee any particular case of grievance conected with the reduction of wages, as stated by Mr. Birken?—I have a Bill f J. Birken's here; I take very little notice of these things generally, but I saw the other day. Birken is a secretary, and professes to be the secretary of ne three counties, as this will show: there are delegates in almost every village n the three counties, but Birken, I imagine, principally concerns the Nottingamshire and Derbyshire trade; not so much the Leicester trade, because the eicester trade is more of the worsted quality, and the Derbyshire and Nottingamshire is cotton and silk, and so forth, like my own.

6190. The complaint made by Birken, and those people who attended the neeting to which this paper refers, was with regard to the use of frames that ere not working to their real owners?—The object of the clause which I have ndermarked is to show that trade being depressed a great many workmen ere turned out of work; they had hosiers' frames in a complete state; I mean hat the presser and everything was upon them to work; there was no part of he frame taken away, so that the men could not work it. Birken, and the ommittee that sat in October, saw these men holding the hosiers' frames ithout work, also saw that the stocking-makers, in order to get work, would

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go and work under the regular fixed, legal, and stated price that was generall known.

6191. They not having to pay any rent?—Yes; and then of course th would work their frames without rent; so Birken and his delegates, sitting they do almost like a Parliament at the Dove and Rainbow, Nottingham, frame a resolution recommending the hosiers, that is to say the manufacturers, lik myself and the great houses at Nottingham, to cause some part of the frame t be removed, so as to prevent these men working frames away from the rightfi owner, and bringing about a general reduction of wages; and that such workin under price I believe has been the general cause of the reduction that has take place from time to time; it is not the great manufacturers that bring about th reduction of wages, it is when there is a depression of trade, and the men g and work secretly at under wages to the middlemen.

6192. The complaint of Birken and the other parties who attended th meeting, was that workmen holding the masters' frames, and not being employe by the master, went and offered, having no rent to pay for the use of the fram their services at a rate lower than the usual rate, to those who would emplo them?—Yes.

6193. Supposing an Act of Parliament were passed to abolish frame ren altogether, would that, in your opinion, prevent a workman from going to manufacturer, and offering his labour at less than the usual wages in a time scarcity of employment?—No, I do not see that it would; of course it always desirable, when a manufacturer's frames lie down, that he should hav some part of his frames worked if he has an opportunity of doing so, and vast many would; what I mean to say is, that there is a proportion of th stocking-makers who would be induced to do wrong, while others are as honou able as any other class of men in society.

6194. When a depression in the trade takes place, is it the workman alone wh suffers, or does the master suffer alongwith him?—The honourable and respectab masters, and men of capital suffer in this way. I suffer myself, and so do all r spectable manufacturers who have any good feeling for their workmen, in th way; our trade is extremely fickle and changeable; when there is a depressio it generally becomes a general depression, and therefore our material alway falls in price, and too generally, I regret to say, the wages fall. We are oblige to lay up large stocks to keep the men employed; when the demand ceases, generally ceases to a very great extent; we must suffer from that, and it is woeful loss to us when there has been a depression of trade, such as there is this time. Our warehouse, perhaps, glutted with a large stock; then, of cours material frequently falls in value, and the wages fall; and when a thing falls i the market, it goes through the London market, which I call the emporium the trade, and there must be a general drop upon all the stock; and a sma drop of a shilling or sixpence a dozen on a large stock makes, of course, a immense amount of loss to the manufacturer.

6195. If it has been stated to the Committee that it is in the power of manufacturer to fix the price of his goods, and to sell them at such price, yo do not believe in that?—No; suppose a manufacturer has a quantity of fin cotton goods which he should sell at 20*s.* a dozen, if he is to realise a fair profi if there should be a stagnation in the trade, he may walk into the Londo warehouses, as I have done for about 40 years, and find that his neighbours a selling lower, perhaps; his neighbours never tell him of this; he only finds out by what he is told by the buyers; he finds it out by the buyers refusing continue to buy his goods as they used to do.

6196. In other words, if he wants to sell his goods, he must take the be price he can obtain in the market?—Yes.

6197. Is it your opinion that if the masters are suffering from a depresse state of trade, no legislation can protect the workmen against experiencing equal amount of that suffering, or that the workmen, in other words, mu share in the depression?—Yes; but a workman who is working to a respectab manufacturer with capital (for I wish to lay a particular stress on manufacture possessing capital), and who rents a frame from him, I consider enjoys blessing, because, in that case, he will enjoy a permanency of work during depression of trade; whereas, if he works to a little man or middleman, th middleman has not capital to employ him; what goods he makes he must se as he makes them, and then, when his capital is worn out, he stops; but it n

: so with the manufacturer with capital; he has an affectionate feeling for his rkmen, and does not like to turn them off.

5198. He has a strong inducement to keep his workmen together, and his chinery employed, although there is no profit to induce him to do it?—ean to say that I injure myself by doing it; but I do it rather than turn my rkmen off.

5199. It has been stated to the Committee, that even where, as in your own :e, the business is conducted on fair and equitable principles with reference the workmen, the abolition of the frame-rent system would produce a better ling between the workmen and their employers; what is your opinion upon it subject?—It would, I think, engender all sorts of bitterness and confusion here were to be an abolition of the frame-rent system. Our frames are ead all over the villages for about 10 or 12 miles round, and we should have supervision over the frames if that were to be the case; we could not tell o the frames worked to; the bagman would walk round to the stocking-kers' shops, and would say, "Who do you work to?" "I work to Ratcliffe." What does he give for work?" "10*s.* a dozen." "He must consider the erest of his capital, and the wear and tear of his frame, and therefore, if you rk to him, I can give you a great deal better price; most middlemen can e you a better price than Mr. Ratcliffe; thus work to me, and you may fraud him in this way: you may make him six pairs of stockings now and n, and send that work in to him; but when you have done so, then make me many as you can, and put my mark into my work; by that means Ratcliffe l be short of work always in prosperous times, and I shall be able to sell e work made off his own frames, and it will be for your and my benefit;" it is, it would be for the benefit of the middleman and stocking-maker.

6200. You think that that would be the operation of it?—I am satisfied of it, a practical man.

6201. And on that ground you come to the conclusion that a net system uld not be carried out?—I am satisfied that it would be such a ruinous stem to the respectable manufacturer, that he must give up. I saw yesterday e of the cleverest men in Loughborough, and one of the greatest manufacturers; said, "If I was 20 years younger, and this Bill for the abolition of frame nts was to pass, I would take my frames over to Saxony, and the workmen th me."

6202. It has been stated to this Committee that very large profits are derived m the investment of capital in frames, 50, 100, and even as high as 200 per nt.; have you anything to say upon that point, and can you give us any formation with regard to it from your long experience as a frameholder?—course, observing that this Bill was likely to be brought in, I bestowed some nsiderable attention to the matter.

6203. Do you mean the Bill of last Session which the Honourable Baronet ought before The House?—I mean the Bill that was introduced on the 4th of ay 1853, and after that, on the 22d of March 1854, and the last time on the h of March 1855, which I consider to be a Bill for the abolition of frame rents.

6204. In the prospect of such a Bill being again introduced, you made a inute investigation with regard to this point?—I have been in the habit of eing stock-taking more than once in every year; I suppose I have been at stock-takings; and I thought that if I made my calculation, as Government equently requires calculations to be made, that is on an average of three ars, it would be satisfactory to bring before the Committee. I therefore took y stock-book for the year 1852, as at that time I had 126 frames; I take ose frames at 1,332*l.*

6205. That you take as their value?—As their value. The repairs that year st me 36*l.* 16*s.* 7½*d.*, and as I reduced them a little, having 57, I ought to say , frames lying down ever since the year 1838, and many of them four, five, x, eight, ten, to sixteen years ending last year; I generally reduced those that down a little, and I reduced them that year 17*l.*

6206. Do you mean that in addition to the money which you actually pended in the repair of them you make a reduction under the head of depre-ation?—Yes; the reduction is quite unconnected with the repairs.

6207. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the number of frames?—There were 126 ames in 1852.

6208. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What is the total value of them?—£. 1,332.

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6209. This is a statement founded on 126 frames?—Yes, this is a statement founded on 126 frames.

6210. What sum did you expend in repairs?—The repairs were 36*l.* 16*s.* 7½*d.*

6211. What do you deduct for depreciation?—£. 17.

6212. What was the net then?—Would you like to know what the frame rents are?

6213. Yes.—I took out the frame rents for that year, 148*l.* 8*s.* 8½*d.*

6214. What is the balance?—I will go on for two more years, if you please.

6215. No; have you the net balance of that year?—No; I have got the net balance of three years. In 1853 I had 129 frames, 1,353*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*

6216. That was the value of them?—Yes.

6217. Now give us the deductions?—£. 27. 10*s.*, and yet the rent is less.

6218. What is the rent?—£. 140. 8. 1½.

6219. Sir *H. Halford.*] These are all narrow frames, are they not?—No, not all; principally.

6220. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Now give us the next year?—1854: July the 1st is when we always take stock; 129 frames, 1,375*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.*

6221. Repairs?—£. 48. 3.

6222. Deductions for depreciation?—£. 18.

6223. Frame rents?—£. 141. 12. 1½.

6224. Now give us the result of the three years?—I have the aggregate of the three years' value, which is 4,061*l.* 11*s.*

6225. What is the average of that?—The average of that is 1,353*l.* 17*s.* Then the repairs together for the three years, 200*l.* 15*s.* 1½*d.*; the deduction for three years, 62*l.* 10*s*; that I have added together, making the repairs and the deduction 263*l.* 5*s.* 1½*d.*

6226. What is the average?—£. 87. 15. 0½. Then I have taken the interest of capital at 5 per cent., 67*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*

6227. That is the average of the three years?—Yes.

6228. Now give us the average rents?—The three years' rents together are 430*l.* 8*s.* 11½*d.*

6229. Now the average of that?—If you divide that by three it gives 143*l.* 9*s.* 8*d.*

6230. What is the result?—The result is, that against my capital invested in frames there is 155*l.* 8*s.* 10½*d.*

6231. Less than five per cent.?—Yes; whereas the rent was only 143*l.* 9*s.* 8*d.*, the average paying me less than 11*l.* 19*s.* 2½*d.* per year.

6232. Less than five per cent.?—Yes.

6233. So that the repairs and outlays, and the depreciation of the machine, exceeds the five per cent. interest received from rents?—I am a loser of 11*l.* 19*s.* 2½*d.* I have not put down the depreciation in the value of the frames at so much as I should have done by a great deal.

6234. So that the total result of that calculation has been to show that your investment in frames has not paid you five per cent. interest?—Yes.

6235. And that is in connexion with the manufacture of the stocking upon them?—Yes.

6236. So that although statements have been made here of a profit being derived from frames, to the extent of 50, 100, and even 200 per cent., your experience shows that that is not the case?—It is not the case with me; I am competent to give you an account of the original cost of every one of these frames, if the Committee desire it.

6237. Mr. *Ingham.*] Upon the average, you estimate the value of each of your frames at 10 guineas?—I have got it all written out. The original actual cost of my 129 frames, 1836, amounts to

	£.	*s.*	*d.*	
	1,524	9	2	= each 11*l.* 16*s.* 3¼*d.* $\frac{3}{129}$
From 1836, July 1, to May 1854, repairs of the same frames -	956	9	–	
Divide by 129)	2,480	18	2	= each 19*l.* 4*s.* 7½*d.* $\frac{24}{129}$

6238. Is that the purchase-money you paid for them, or your own estimate of their value?—Certainly it is not my own opinion merely; I have here 21 framesmith's bills which I could show you.

6239. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How do you arrive at the value of 1,300*l.*?—I have rather reduced them; the actual cost of my 129 frames was 1,524*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.*

6240. That

6240. That being the price at which you purchased them from your retiring partner, Mr. Oliver?—Yes, on the 1st of July 1836, with several that I bought after. Carcases I paid 7 *l.* and 8 *l.* for, and for a 42 frame I paid 12 guineas to put a new inside into it. I can tell you what the cost of everything has been, needles, sinkers, and everything for any gauge you like.

6241. Mr. *Ingham.*] What proportion of these are narrow frames?—Most of them are narrow frames; but you will consider that a vast number of my frames are very fine, principally from 30 gauges to forty-fours, and some are ribbed frames. I have 21 framesmiths' bills here, which will show that for 117 frames I paid 650*l.* odd. I could give you the exact figure, 657*l.* 12*s.* 8*d.*

6242. Mr. *Cheetham.*] These frames of yours are not only liable to depreciation by the wear and tear of them, but by reasons of changes and inventions which are continually going on?—When I first went into business such a thing as a thread being laid on a frame by a carrier was thought a miracle. An old man in the house where I was would not believe that the thread could be laid by a carrier; but after that it was found to make two stockings at once, and two or three feet at once.

6243. And more recently you have had improvements, have you not?—For many years there have been frames that have made the legs, the narrowings, and so on; and then, after that, the stockings were put on a second frame, and then on a third, to foot several at once; that is a great opposition to these frames. The Act which is now in contemplation would injure my trade very much; indeed it would drive it out, because mine are old wrought frames, which are spread over the country, and of which there are a great many; some gentlemen in this room know better than I do how many there are, but there are an immensity of them. It would, however, injure the workman quite as much as the hosier; and I hope I shall be able to show that if the Committee have patience to examine me.

6244. You say it would injure the workman as much as the hosier?—Yes, it would injure the workmen considerably, inasmuch as if this Bill was to pass we could not stop the frame rent, which I maintain is a legitimate stoppage. All my workmen when they receive their material have a ticket given to them, and that ticket was given to them many years before the Ticket Act came into operation; that Act came into operation, I believe, on the 1st of January 1846, but we delivered out tickets at Loughborough long before September 1819. I delivered out tickets to the men because I wished them to have a right understanding of their agreement.

6245. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do you deliver tickets now?—Always, and I should wish to do it. We do it for this reason, that the men understand the ticket; and the more simple the ticket is the better, for if it were made out in any complex or tedious manner they would not understand it.

6246. Sir *H. Halford.*] Have you any tickets with you that you can show us?—No; but I can explain to you what they are. We printed some tickets at Loughborough when the Act came into operation; but we get a piece of paper, which is plainer to the men, and take a rule and make a mark of the stripe to be put in, and so on; we then write down the number of leads and the gauge of the frame, and after that we put the leads he is to set the foot on, the narrowings down the leg, the narrowings in the heel, the toes, the gussets, and every particular, so that the workman has every particular it is necessary for him to have. The fact is, that it is the simplest and most honest system possible for a contract between the master and the workman. The price also is put on, and the length; if, then, the workman falls short in any one of those iotas in that ticket, he of course does not perform the measure of his work.

6247. Are you aware of the forms of the tickets which are shown in the Schedule to the Act?—I have the Act in London, but I did not bring it here.

6248. Do you think there is any practical objection to giving such a ticket as is required to be given by that Act?—No; I cannot see that there is, because we practised the system before ever the Ticket Act came into operation.

6249. Are your forms similar to those which are given in the Act?—They are similar; but they are as simple as we can write them, in order that the men may understand them better.

6250. You think, then, that if any complaint was made of complication and difficulty in complying with that Act of Parliament, it was an unreasonable complaint?—I am not aware that there ought to be any complaint of the Ticket

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Act. I do not remember every provision of it, but we practise everything that is necessary as honourably as it can be done.

6251. And you think it desirable for the sake of the workmen that that practice should be followed?—I do think so; there is a ticket delivered from the warehouse describing every particle of labour the workman has to do, and the price he is to receive for it. Of course I have nothing to do with middlemen, but if I had anything to do with middlemen, I should deliver to the middleman that ticket, and I should have nothing to do with the men he employed. Our prices are fixed and known, and watched by all these delegates. If any hosier was to give a ticket, and set on the ticket a couple of leads more, or the length half an inch longer, or if he were to put another narrowing down the leg, or in the heel or the gusset, or if he were to add any particle of work more than is commonly known, the delegates would be on him directly.

6252. Do you not think that where delegates are employed tickets are specially necessary as a means by which the workman may be informed what the price is?—According to my principle, it is necessary that all parties should know the price, the respectable hosier, the middleman, and the workman; I do not think there should be any secret about it.

6253. You do not carry on your business by means of middlemen at all?—No; I and my son take in our work with our own hands. I have had a little to do with middlemen in trifling cases, but not worth mentioning; for instance, where now and then there has been a foreign order for some straight-down cotton ribs, such as are made at Hathern; and that is a wonderful thing: many men from Hathern, within my recollection, walked up to Parliament to ask for an Act to be passed to declare that there should be no straight-down stockings; that all stockings should be made full-wrought and full-fashioned, and that no heels should be cut; and I can tell you what was done after sitting a long time; many respectable hosiers were examined upon the point, and, to the best of my recollection, the Legislature said they could not interfere in such a case, and that they would recommend all parties to go home, and not to make any work but what was full-fashioned; but it is a most extraordinary fact that they did go home, and shortly after that they made more spurious work than ever was made before. At one time I used to make a great many ribbed cotton stockings, such as one-and-ones, two-and-ones, broad ribs, and various sorts, and perhaps I have had more practice in that than any man living. The Pagets did a considerable business in it, but the old gentlemen are all dead, and now if I were to ask a man in this place to make me a fashioned stocking I could not get him to do it, for they now work about three stockings to fit a man at once, one-and-ones; and they work with carriers, and so they will not be at the trouble to use the hand and narrow them.

6254. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The Committee understand that you adopted the system of delivering tickets in your own business as far back as the year 1819?—Long before 1819, by our own wish, in order that there should be a most perfect understanding between us and our workmen.

6255. And you see no reason why what you have thus effected as an equitable arrangement between you and your workmen should not be voluntarily adopted by other parties?—I should have thought that both manufacturers and workmen would have mutually desired it. Before the statement to which I have referred was made stockings were made in a most irregular manner; a hosier now can make his goods quite regular; if he gives a certain quantity of material out, he knows what it should produce. When I was a young man, before we adopted the ticket system and the lead system, we used to have perhaps 40 or 50 dozen of a certain gauge stocking, and we used to have to sort them out, for some men would set them on wider than others, and the consequence was, that a certain sort were composed of three values.

6256. With regard to your recommendation of the adoption of the ticket system, you assume that it should be voluntary on both sides, do you not?—I think it should be voluntary on both sides; I desire it myself.

6257. You desire that it should be adopted voluntarily by both parties?—I have no objection to an Act of Parliament for it; I believe there is one; if there be, I have no objection to conform to it.

6258. I suppose you have some knowledge with regard to the returns made for the investment of money in frames, for the purpose of letting them out again; have you any instance of a return for the investment of money in frames?—No more than the rents.

6259. Where

6259. Where do your workmen live generally?—My workmen principally live at Sheepshed; I have some at Long-Whatton and Hathern; I have had many at Belton, Whitwick, and other places.

6260. And have you to bring in their work from these distances on a Saturday?—Yes; there are a few cases in which they live at a distance, and they send the work in by a carrier; the workman sends his ticket with the work, and then I always send a ticket back; I always tell my men, "Now I deliver you this ticket, and when you bring the work back, lay the ticket before me on the counter and I will give it you back."

6261. Can you state what are the average earnings of your workmen?—I have a memorandum here of the wages I paid my workmen for eight weeks, ending last year.

6262. What would it be per week?—I have taken out the earnings of a great many of my men for eight weeks, ending the 20th of May 1854. Here is a person named James Tabb, who lives at Castle Dunnington, he generally sends his goods by a carrier, and sometimes he comes himself.

6263. Mr. *Biggs.*] What are his earnings?—On the 5th of April he received, net wages, after paying 9 *d.* frame rent, for a 26-gauge frame, 9 *s.* 9 *d.*; that was after paying 9 *d.* for a frame that has, including several times, cost me 20 *l.* 5 *s.* 10 *d.*

6264. What is the next?—The next is a very steady man, named John Dix; he works a 34-gauge frame; but I have not gone through all the weeks of the other man; unless you take several weeks, you will scarcely know what they get; I should like to go a little further.

6265. Are these statements all of which you can speak to?—Yes. On the 8th of April that man received 12 *s.* 8 *d.*, on the 15th 10 *s.* 4 *d.*, on the 22nd 13 *s.* 10 *d.*; he is the first man I have on my books; on the 29th 9 *s.* 9 *d.*, on the 6th of May 9 *s.* 9 *d.*; as it happens to be exactly 9 *s.* 9 *d.* I will tell you precisely how it was; he brought in a fortnight's work, and I divided the money into two weeks.

6266. Did any of those sums include the wages earned by any portion of his family?—Perhaps somebody might seam the work; he would not seam it himself, of course; that would be all. He is a man living in his own house, therefore he would have nothing to pay for what is called standing, or for fire or coal, or anything of that kind. This is what I call the domesticated trade.

6267. You say you do not take full rent when you give out only half work?—I can hardly say that I ever give out half work; I will not say that I never did; if ever I did I only took half rent; but I cannot remember when I did give out half work; my principle is to employ a man, and give him full work as long as I can, and if I cannot give him full work I lay down the frame. I never stop a man instanter; if he makes his work well, I give him a fortnight's notice, or perhaps more.

6268. It is not your custom to take full rent when a man is sick, is it?—Not if I can find that the man has really been sick, and that he is not defrauding me.

6269. Have you reason to think that it is the custom at Loughborough with any other manufacturer?—I believe it is with one; for I have had some conversation with him, and he says that when trade is bad, as I believe it is at this time, he has given his men what is called stint work; I will not say half work, because I cannot tell the proportion. I do not know whether stint work is half work, or more than half. He says he takes full rent in such cases, but if he does, he allows the workman to get work where he likes for the rest of the time. He does this: he says to the man, "It is optional with you whether you will pay rent or bring your presser in, and let your frame stand altogether;" so that in that case the man has his choice.

6270. You have told the Committee that, in your opinion, frame rents cannot be dispensed with?—Surely; I am decidedly of opinion that if frame rents were abolished the effect would be to do the greatest possible injury to the whole trade, if not to break it up.

6271. Are you of opinion that the charges made by the middleman for his services can be dispensed with?—The middleman must be entitled to something; in the first place, he takes his work from the hosier, and is responsible for the material; that is worth something; then he spends his day's work. I know a great many middlemen at Sheepshed who go to Leicester; they keep a spring-cart and a horse; I know them, because they pass my house as they

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they go from Sheepshed to Leicester; there are 14 middlemen in that place.

6272. For these services the middleman must make deductions in the shape of charges?—There must be some agreement between them. Then the stocking-maker, of course, while the middleman is taking the work in, may be earning something for himself.

6273. Suppose an Act of Parliament were passed by which not only frame rents but charges were abolished, how is a middleman to be paid, or how is the trade to be carried on?—I will state a case of this sort. I consider this manufacture that I am concerned with as it is at Sheepshed. There is a master stocking-maker, perhaps, with five or six frames working to a hosier; some of his frames may be in the house, or, if he works six or eight frames, perhaps he has a small shop, which costs a very little, adjoining the house; I call it a domestic manufacture, as I have before said; he lives in a cheap village house, and has a cheap garden, and perhaps an allotment; he, his wife, and perhaps some of his family, and possibly three or four journeymen, have six or eight frames among them, and they all work together for the week for one common fund. The master stocking-maker is to be considered more skilful than the rest, and he takes out all the tickets, and is responsible for all the work; he superintends it, and as he is the most skilful hand he teaches all those who are under him to do the work in a proper manner; he is solely responsible to the hosier for the work. Then, if he takes two or three journeymen, of course there must be charges to those journeymen; some of these journeymen are 16 or 18 years old, perhaps they are not 21, and have no home or establishment of their own; they are journeymen under a master stocking-maker, and it is beneficial to them, for they could not get work in any other way; they have their lodging to pay for, and their food, washing, and all those sort of things, and if a master stocking-maker could not make deductions for all these domestic expenses, the frame rent, candle light, coal, and every little iota that is wanted, no master stocking-maker could take journeymen. And, again, if this Bill were to pass to secure the payment of wages without stoppages, direct or indirect, a journeyman could cheat a master stocking-maker on Saturday night, for a master stocking-maker would be obliged to put the money into the journeyman's hands without any deduction, and then the master would say, perhaps, to the journeyman, "You must pay me for your week's board and lodging," and all the other charges I have enumerated. It might happen, perhaps, that a journeyman had been living upon the master two or three weeks before; he might have been out cricket playing, or engaged in some other amusement, and he might say afterwards, "I will go away and not pay the master."

6274. Mr. *Cheetham.*] During the latter portion of the time you have been in business, you have known many instances in which there has been great depression in the hosiery trade, have you not?—Yes.

6275. How has Hinckley stood during periods of depression, as compared with your district?—I have no doubt that Hinckley has often suffered very greatly; it is a coarse manufacture that is carried on there; I know something of it; I have one or two frames of the same sort myself; they are about 21 or 22 gauge frames generally; it is the old wrought trade.

6276. Is the trade of Hinckley declining or extending?—I am surprised myself that it has maintained its ground so well as it has, because there are wide frames there that are making very strong coarse cotton hose, and I believe worsted too.

6277. And they are making them at less cost than the small narrow frames, are they not?—Yes; they must oppose the old wrought-hose frames very much indeed.

6278. And in that opposition the wages of the workmen in the Hinckley wrought-hose branch would necessarily fall?—They must of course be a serious opposition to them; I believe that Hinckley has been paid worse for her work than she is now; our wages at Loughborough are much higher than they were before 1849; there was an advance then.

6279. Are you of opinion that any legislation whatever can prevent the result of the competition which exists between improved and defective machinery?—I should think it was contrary to all business economy, and all political economy, that if machinery were invented so that it should make the best and cheapest goods, it should not be suffered to work. I should think that contrary to all rational principles.

6280. *Chairman.*]

6280. *Chairman.*] I want to ask you as to the general trade of Loughborough more than your own. Do you come here as deputed by the manufacturers generally in Loughborough to give evidence?—I will give you the most honest answer I can; I have been awake to Sir Henry Halford's Bill ever since it was first mooted, and I have watched it and seen the injury it would do the trade.

6281. Are you deputed by the manufacturers generally in Loughborough to come here as a witness?—The manufacturers were all willing, and wished me to come; but I should have come without them. I think it highly necessary that I should.

6282. But do you come with their concurrence?—I come with their common consent.

6283. Do you think that the manufacturers in Loughborough generally agree with you in your sentiments with regard to this matter?—Yes; I am satisfied they do; one or two of the most sensible men there have seen what I have written in this book.

6284. You remember when the Commissioner, Mr. Muggeridge, came to Loughborough in 1844?—He came to Loughborough and examined me in 1844.

6285. You were examined among other manufacturers?—I was.

6286. Were there not four or five other manufacturers in Loughborough examined?—Yes; Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Watson were examined.

6287. Have you read the evidence which relates to Loughborough that was taken before the Commissioner?—Yes, I have the book here.

6288. You have read that evidence?—I have read a good deal of the evidence, and I have read something respecting three men who have stated what is false about me. I am afraid there are some untruths in that book.

6289. I merely speak with regard to the gentlemen from Loughborough, who were examined at that time; there was Mr. John Cooke?—Yes.

6290. He is a manufacturer in Loughborough, is he not?—Yes; but he found it a bad business, and has retired and become a miller.

6291. He was a manufacturer then?—Yes.

6292. Mr. William White was also examined, was he not?—Yes; he is deceased.

6293. Mr. Cartwright was examined?—Yes.

6294. Mr. John Watson was examined?—Yes.

6295. And Mr. William Deane?—Yes; but Mr. William Deane is not much in the way we are; this Bill will not affect him as it will us.

6296. However, he was examined?—Yes.

6297. He was a manufacturer in Loughborough?—Yes; and gave his evidence rather differently to what we did.

6298. I want to know whether all these manufacturers in Loughborough are of the same opinion as you with regard to this question?—Yes; Mr. Deane I have nothing to do with; his trade is very different to mine, and also to those gentlemen's aforesaid. Mr. Watson concurs with me, and so does Mr. Cartwright and his partners, the Warners, and so do all the Pagets and Whites.

6299. If I understand you correctly the frame rents in Loughborough are lower than they are in the other parts of the county of Leicester?—The frame rents at Loughborough are the same as they always were, and the lower gauged frames are charged lower rents than the southern parts of the county.

6300. As I understand you, the lower frame rents are 9 *d.* a week?—The lower frame rents worked by hand are 9 *d.* a week; if worked by carriers in two or three parts at once, they are more.

6301. Are not the same frames in other parts of the county of Leicester usually charged 1 *s.*?—I believe that at Hinckley and Leicester they are charged 1 *s.*

6302. You were asked whether you made any deductions except for frame rent, and I understood you to say you did not?—No; we make no other deduction.

6303. You make no deduction except for bad work and frame rent?—If a man makes his work unsound, we make a deduction for that.

6304. Your deduction is solely and only for frame rent?—Only for frame rent; I did deduct 5 *s.* 1 ½ *d.* for damaged work; but then I paid considerably more; I was out of pocket by it.

6305. Your deductions are for frame rent only?—For frame rent only.

6306. And you say that at Loughborough it is not usual to employ middlemen; do I understand you rightly?—I believe there is a little done in that way.

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6307. But it is not the general custom in Loughborough?—No, it is not.

6308. Do they not, in your case, work direct to your warehouse?—Direct to the warehouse; and the work passes direct through my hands, or my son's, or my assistant's.

6309. Is not that the case with regard to the other manufacturers?—Yes; it is at Mr. Watson's.

6310. And also at Mr. Cartwright's?—Yes, and also at Mr. Cartwright's.

6311. Sir *H. Halford.*] The workmen living in the villages work direct to the warehouse without any middleman, do they not?—Yes; they come to the warehouse, or send the work in by carriers.

6312. Those are workmen resident in the villages in the neighbourhood?—Yes.

6313. *Chairman.*] Do you, having been a considerable time in the trade, think that the work might be carried on without middlemen?—I do not think it could in many cases.

6314. It is the general practice in Loughborough, is it not?—There is a middleman that Mr. Watson employs; I will tell you, if you please, what he does.

6315. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What do you understand by a middleman?—A middleman and a bagman I understand to be the same.

6316. *Chairman.*] And undertakers?—I consider all three to be the same.

6317. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you any middleman or bagman in your employ at the present moment?—No, I have not.

6318. *Chairman.*] I understand you to say, and nothing can be fairer than the way in which you conduct your business, that where sickness is proved you do not take the full rent?—If I find it to be the fact that the workman has been sick, and I generally try.

6319. Is that the general principle that is adopted among the manufacturers in Loughborough?—Upon my word I should think it is, in some cases, but I cannot speak positively to it; I have reason to think that the hosiers would be considerate; but I could not answer the question positively.

6320. Is it not more usual than otherwise for the manufacturers in Loughborough, during sickness, to take frame rent?—I cannot go into that; I ought to answer your questions with a perfect knowledge of the facts.

6321. I will take the case of Mr. John Cooke; do you recollect his evidence before the Commissioner?—No; I have read it, but I do not recollect it.

6322. Because, in his evidence before the Commissioner, he was asked whether it was the practice of the house to take the frame rent in cases of sickness, and his answer was, "Not always, but we have no standing principle, to say that we will not do it;" that shows, with regard to Mr. John Cooke, that it is not his principle to give back the rent where the workman is sick?—Mr. John Cooke is always considered a very respectable man.

6323. Mr. White has been dead some years, has he not?—Yes.

6324. He was a member of the firm of Paget & White?—Yes; his is not very favourable evidence.

6325. He is asked also, in Question No. 7931, the same question, "Is it your practice to charge full frame rent, in case of sickness, or in times of stinted work?" and his answer is, "As a general rule we always charge the full frame rent"?—Yes; it is so, that is, I mean such was his answer in the Blue Book.

6326. I will refer you next to the evidence given by Mr. William Deane, to whom I have referred before?—That is a very insignificant case compared to the others; he is also a different manufacturer; I should say he can keep his frames in a factory; that is the distinction, whether we can keep our frames in a factory, or not.

6327. His answer to Question No. 8062, is, "It is customary with the whole of the trade, I believe; I do not scarcely know an exception, except myself, to charge the workmen the rent in sickness, and at all times when they absent themselves from their work;" he states that broadly, as the general rule of the trade, and says that he believes he is the only exception in Loughborough; that he is the only person who does not do it?—He is a very trifling manufacturer himself.

6328. I suppose he has formed some judgment with regard to these matters?—He may; but his business is altogether a different one from ours.

6329. Is

6329. Is his statement correct, when he says that he does not know a single exception, or any case in which they do not charge the workmen the rent; that he knows of no case, except his own, in which they do not charge the workmen rent in cases of sickness?—It is not true as regards myself; if I can find out that they are really sick; it is very easy for us to be imposed on by false statements and excuses.

6330. With regard to stint, is he correct in this: "In times of stint, full rent is charged generally, and it is customary for master manufacturers to have more machinery than they really need, for the purpose of keeping them all employed, to realise the utmost amount of frame rent possible, as the best part of their profits"?—I know nothing of that.

6331. Do you agree in that?—I do not know anything of that sort; I should be ashamed to practise it; it is quite contrary to my principles.

6332. You have been asked whether it would be at all for the benefit of the trade if there were to be an abolition of frame rents by Act of Parliament; is that the general feeling among the manufacturers in Loughborough?—Decidedly such an Act would be unjust.

6333. Do you recollect Mr. White's evidence. He is asked, in Question No. 7955, "What in your judgment would be the effect of the abolition of frame rents?" He says, "An equivalent reduction of wages." The next question is, "Do you think it would in any other way influence the interests of the trade?" and his answer is, "It would be for the benefit of the larger manufacturer"?—It staggers me to find that Mr. White could give such an answer; I cannot think how he could calculate. If frame rents were abolished it would no doubt bring about a reduction of wages, but I consider that it could not be equalised; a reduction of wages could be done by no possible adjustment, inasmuch as I should divide the hosiers, and middlemen, and the stocking-makers, into two classes. I should call one set the honourable, and the other the dishonest and dishonourable, and the dishonest and dishonourable would take the work from the honourable.

6334. That is Mr. White's opinion with regard to the manufacturers?—I am quite astonished at his answer.

6335. With regard to the opinion of Mr. Dean; he gives an opinion as regards the workmen; if you turn to Question No. 8072, you will find his opinion as regards the workmen, and again in his answer to Question No. 8074, which is the last question, he says, "I have no doubt some reduction would take place in the price of labour, in case the frame rents were done away with; but on the whole I think it would be decidedly preferable and beneficial to the working men; that is my opinion"?—I think it would not, and I can state why, if you please.

6336. In Question No. 8074, the last question put to Mr. Dean, he was asked: "And you see no practical disadvantages that counterbalance the advantages of the abolition of frame rents?" The answer is, "Not the least whatever, except a loss to the manufacturers, to a certain extent, at first; but it is a loss of that which is gained, not justly, but by oppression?"—Shocking.

6337. That is his statement. "I have no hesitation in saying that it must be oppressive to charge the men full frame rent, on the ground that it is exacted for the repair of the frame, when the frame is but partially at work"?—I should not think that any person ever charges a stocking-maker for a frame when it is repairing.

6338. But it is in evidence that it has been so?—I should not have thought such a thing; I might have read this, but I could not have conceived such a thing; it would be certainly highly unjust.

6339. At the close of this answer he says, "I have not found anywhere, except in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire, any charge for machinery, nor in any other than in what is called the hosiery trade. It is a system that has been introduced from the circumstance, that when trade was good, many years ago, people were induced to lay out money to buy frames for small manufacturers, and the frames have now become let at a higher rent. As a general principle, 35 years ago we paid double the price for work we pay now; and the highest price for frame rent then was 9 *d.*, and now the same frames are paying 1 *s.* regularly. I may safely say the men are not getting 6 *s.* where they got 10 *s.* 6 *d.*, and they have more work to put into the hose, and they are better-fashioned and better-made goods than were made in those days; that is, the wrought hose I am speaking of, and to that I was appren-

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ticed in Leicestershire. And I might add, that I do not hesitate against myself to say, that it is against my own individual interest to give up the rental; but I am satisfied it would be a blessing to the working classes." That is the evidence of one of your manufacturers at Loughborough?—Yes; but he is a very different sort of manufacturer to the rest there. I, altogether am ignorant of his "warp and Berlin" manufacture,—altogether unconnected with him or his business—feel myself not responsible to account for his preposterous and absurd evidences.

6340. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is there anything to prevent the manufacturer referred to, from adopting a net system of his own accord if he pleases?—I should think that most of his frames are in a factory; but I know very little about him; he is quite an insignificant manufacturer.

6341. Is there anything to prevent him from adopting the net system of his own accord if he pleases, without legislative aid?—No; he could do it without legislative aid, of course, if he and his men would agree.

6342. *Chairman.*] You have heard, have you not, that there have been considerable complaints made of the frame-rent system, by the hands in Loughborough, though not among those you yourself employ?—Yes; but our frames are very expensive; I can tell you what every one of mine cost.

6343. I am only speaking of the hands; has there not been a considerable degree of complaint on their part of the charges made for frame rents?—My hands never made any complaint against me.

6344. But has it been generally so among other manufacturers in Loughborough; you seem to carry on your business, according to your statement, more fairly than the generality of manufacturers?—I carry on my business as conscientiously and honestly as I can, and with considerable forbearance, and I suffer a great deal of injury sometimes by doing so.

6345. Is not there among the workmen, in and about Loughborough, considerable complaint made with regard to these frame rents?—I cannot say much about that, I am sure; of course a great many of them are very ignorant, and think that most likely if these frame rents were abolished, they would maintain the same rate of wages.

6346. Have you not heard that?—No; I have heard very little about it.

6347. Mr. Cartwright, when he was examined before the Commissioner, in answer to this question, "You have probably heard that the system of frame rents is much complained of by the hands?" said, "We have;" have you not heard that there are those complaints?—No; I have scarcely any complaints.

6348. I am not asking as to yourself, but I am asking what is the general feeling with regard to other manufacturers, and whether you have not heard of complaints as to them?—Of course a stocking-maker, if he has half work and pays full rent, would have a just right to complain.

6349. You have heard of such complaints?—Yes, and another thing is, that whenever I have heard of it, I have found great fault with it myself, I have thought it unjust; but one manufacturer told me, that if he stints his hands he takes full rent, but then he says to the men, "If you do not like half work, bring your presser in and then you will be thrown quite out of work, or if not, you will have part work with me, and part with another;" but I have nothing to do with such a system myself, for I always like to act straightforward.

6350. There are some manufactures who do wrong, and others who do right?—Yes; as is the case in most societies of men.

6351. But when laws are passed, the object is to prevent those who are inclined to do wrong from doing so?—That is the intention of laws, no doubt.

6352. Laws are not passed in order to control those who would do right without them; but to control those who, but for those laws, would do wrong; is not that the case?—Of course it is.

6353. You say there are some of the manufacturers who do wrong?—I should say there are a proportion who may exact more than others.

6354. Have they it in their power to be oppressive to their workmen if they are inclined to do wrong to them?—They have, if the men will work to them; with regard to the trucking, I have often heard of that, and I am astonished to find that men will go and work to middlemen, where, instead of receiving all their wages in the current coin of the realm, they will take sugar, butter, cheese, and all those sort of things. There was a man who had a penalty laid upon him for carrying on the system of truck, but the system ruined him, for he

he gave the men so much credit; one man owed him 8 *l.* and another 10 *l.*, and eventually he got ruined.

6355. Are not the workmen so completely bound to their masters, in many cases, that they are unable to relieve themselves of them?—I am glad you have asked me that question; the men are not so bound as it is said they are, and things are not so one-sided as they have been represented to be; for the fact is, as I have before said, the delegates can easily advise the men to go to a respectable hosier if they think they are injured by others; but I am sorry to say, for it seems a great misfortune, that the workmen often prefer working to the bagmen.

6356. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why is that?—I cannot account for it; I think it is their own misfortune.

6357. *Chairman.*] Do you think they are as well used in the hands of bagmen and middlemen as they would be if they were in the hands of the manufacturers?—In some cases I should think they are not; I will not say in all. I divide that class as I would all others.

6358. Is it not in the power of a middleman, if he is unprincipled, to materially oppress the workmen in his employ?—He may; but then they have the power to move; for you know there are numbers of bagmen and hosiers, and if a man thinks he is not used well by one he can go and seek a better.

6359. Can he do so when trade is slack?—When trade is slack, as it is during these bad times, I can scarcely keep in my upper warehouse; I am constantly called down to give men work, and I do give work to many of them.

6360. Mr. *Mundy.*] You do not employ any middlemen, do you?—No, not one; but the stocking-makers come to me for their own work, or for work for their families. A man may want a frame for his son or daughter, or journeyman.

6361. *Chairman.*] There are many men who apply to you for work who you cannot satisfy, are there not?—A great many; when they come to us we ask them certain questions; we want to know whether they are qualified to do our work, because there is a wonderful variety of work; one man can do work that another cannot; the hosiery trade is not as it was 56 years ago.

6362. I have understood you to say, that a manufacturer with capital is a blessing to those who work under him?—I think so.

6363. And you draw a distinction between a man with capital and a man with little or no capital, or a middleman?—Yes, I do; because now, in these times of depression, when the trade has been in a stagnant state for a long time, I am paying more wages than I pay in good times. I have no doubt that the men would leave me, though I give my men as good work as any one, because perhaps they would go to a different kind of work, which they would prefer.

6364. Do you mean by that to say, that a workman is more likely to be oppressed by working for a man of small capital or a middleman, than he is if he is working for a respectable manufacturer of large capital?—In the case of a man of capital, when he has men working under him for several years, it is repugnant to his feelings to turn those men out of work; he naturally imbibes an affection for the men, and will think it cruel to turn them out of work, and he therefore employs his capital, and lays a large stock of goods in at the risk, or even with the certainty, of losing; but a man of small capital has not money to lay up goods, unless he can keep selling them as he makes them. Plenty of my men tell me they will never leave me while I employ them, because I can always keep them on.

6365. Then there is more cruelty practised towards those who are employed by middlemen, and men of small capital, than there is towards those who are employed by men of capital?—It is not cruelty; it is not in their power to give them work unless they can go to large hosiers to take their work; it is very commonly the case that the largest and most respectable hosiers, we will say in all the large towns in the three counties, will naturally say to the bagman, "Trade is bad; we cannot give you more work;" and they will go off and tell the men working to them, that they cannot give them work.

6366. As I understand, both from the evidence before the Commissioner and also from the evidence you have given to the Committee this morning, the general principle adopted at Loughborough is not to employ middlemen at all?—

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all?—We have a very few middlemen; they may have them in some peculiar cases, because some of these middlemen live at a distance, and some little peculiar work is made.

6367. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The Chairman means to ask whether the employment of middlemen in Loughborough is not the exception?—We have very few; I do not employ them, nor does Mr. Watson.

6368. *Chairman.*] What is the population of Sheepshed?—I really could not tell you; it is very populous; it is full of stocking-makers.

6369. There are six or seven thousand inhabitants, are there not?—Upon my word I do not know, but I have not much doubt of it; it is a large and populous place.

6370. You told the Committee that there are 14 bagmen there?—Yes; and I could tell you the names of them if you wish it.

6371. By whom are they employed?—A great many of them make work and take it to Nottingham and Leicester.

6372. Then as I understand you, a great many of them are employed by Leicester manufacturers, and a good many by Nottingham manufacturers?—There is one man who runs by my house every Wednesday morning (whether he goes to receive orders or not, I cannot tell) in a spring-cart; he goes to Leicester every Saturday morning; his spring-cart is full of work, and I fancy sometimes that he brings a little more work in than he takes to the hosiers themselves; most likely he takes it to some railway, and some of it goes one way and some another.

6373. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is he the owner of frames himself?—I should think a few; several of the bagmen hold some frames.

6374. *Chairman.*] Then the employment of these middlemen at Sheepshed is not an employment with reference to Loughborough, but chiefly with reference to Nottingham and Leicester?—Chiefly.

6375. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are they owners of frames of their own, and besides that do they employ frames belonging to the manufacturer?—I should think they have some frames of their own, and that they also employ what are called independent frames. There are very few frames now which we designate independent frames; I mean frames such as are stated in Mr. Muggeridge's book; those which are the property of butchers, bakers, gentlemen's servants, and so forth, which may be considered as an investment.

6376. The workmen do not hire them of the butchers and bakers themselves directly?—I should think that perhaps the butchers and bakers would let the frames at a certain rent to the middlemen.

6377. And the middlemen let them at an additional rent to the workmen?—Perhaps so; but I should like to say one thing about independent frames. If a person comes and asks me for work, and the frame is not mine, it makes no difference to me; the ticket is the same, and the price is the same; I do not ask him what rent he gives for his frame.

6378. In a case in which the frame is your own, and you let it to a workman, if you are not in a condition to give him full work, should you hold that he was acting wrongly towards you if he took work from another man to work on your frame; would you allow him to do that?—I should say that if I charged him rent he ought to be allowed to get work elsewhere if I did not give him full work; but I give my men full work, or else I lay my frame down; I do not allow my men to work half work for me, and to work for another man.

6379. Therefore this rent which a workman pays you for a frame does not imply an absolute possession, on his part, of the frame, but he is subject to a condition that he shall work to you only?—Yes, they do sometimes work away.

6380. Mr. *Gardner.*] I suppose you find it answer your purpose in a business point of view not to employ middlemen?—I think I can oversee my own work better than they can.

6381. How many frames have you?—One hundred and twenty-nine now.

6382. Supposing your establishment was much more considerable than it is, you would not be able to dispense with middlemen, would you?—My establishment was much more extensive years ago than it is now; the new inventions in the stocking-frame have very much leant upon my wrought work, and have decreased it very much, inasmuch as now I have 61 frames laid down that cost me upwards of 1,000 *l.*; viz., the original cost 1,081 *l.* 18 *s.* 2 *d.*, or each 17 *l.* 14 *s.* 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{46}{61}$ in 1836.

6383. Do you conceive that the interference of middlemen between the employers

ployers and the workmen is injurious to the workmen?—I do not think that it would be injurious to them if everything was acted up rightly; if the middleman would show the third man who does the work, a ticket, so as to let him see that the price is proper; he would see then that by the intervention of a middleman it suited him to pay the charges.

6384. Do you conceive that frauds are effected upon the workmen by the middlemen?—I do not know what to say to that; they may, of course, be dishonest.

6385. If men are dishonest they can cheat in any trade, of course; but I want to know whether you think the employment of a middleman is not a legitimate, and in many cases a necessary arrangement?—I consider that where it is carried on in a reasonable, fair, and not in an exorbitant manner, it is no doubt very proper, inasmuch as many of the large hosiers do not like to take in the work themselves, and the middleman only becomes almost like a respectable agent between them and their workmen.

6386. Why do not the large hosiers like to take in all the work themselves?—It is a very troublesome thing to do so.

6387. Do you mean that it is impossible for a large hosier to do it?—It is impossible, unless he employs a great many agents.

6388. Then middlemen are necessary in the case of large hosiers?—They are necessary; and I should say that when they conduct themselves properly it is no injury to the workmen themselves, for the workmen can be at work all those days and times that the middlemen are doing their work. Middlemen have a great deal to do; it is evident, from what has passed in the glove trade, that they have a great deal to do.

6389. Is it possible to conduct a large hosiery trade without the intervention of middlemen?—Not unless they have a great many takers-in; and I should say that that would not be very convenient in general cases.

6390. You say it would not be convenient in many cases to have a number of paid takers-in; why not?—It is far less trouble to great manufacturers to have these undertakers or middlemen.

6391. It is less costly to them, I suppose?—It is less troublesome.

6392. It is the most economical way of doing their business?—Perhaps so; and I do not think it is any injury to the stocking-maker, who does the work, as long as there is fair dealing.

6393. *Chairman.*] Provided the man is honest?—Provided all parties are honest.

6394. Mr. *Mundy.*] You said it was the most economical way, did you not?—Of course, the largest manufacturers would have takers-in to pay, at a very high rate; their salaries are very expensive; a man in a hosier's warehouse to take in himself must be a clever fellow, and he must have a large salary; a middleman, as far as he has his work to do in taking in the work as an intervention between the large manufacturer and the stocking-maker, can do it at a less rate.

6395. How is he paid?—He is paid, no doubt, according to an agreement between him and the stocking-maker.

6396. He is paid by the stocking-maker?—He is paid by somebody. I do not apprehend that, when business is done fairly, a middleman is paid much. I do not think he is.

6397. *Chairman.*] When it is done fairly?—Yes, when done fairly.

6398. When it is done unfairly he gets well paid?—Of course, I am speaking broadly when I say what I do.

6399. Mr. *Gardner.*] When a thing is done unfairly, it is done unfairly, there is no doubt about that; but the question put to you is, whether the agency of a middleman can, in a great many cases, and in all cases of large concerns, be dispensed with?—I do not think it could; it has been practised so long that I do not think it could.

6400. *Chairman.*] I want to ask you now as to the custom in Loughborough with regard to frame rents. We are given to understand that both you and those parties who were examined before Mr. Muggeridge, concur in saying that they are about 3*d.* a week lower than they are in other parts of the county of Leicester?—That is to say, the lower gauges; they are more numerous than they were, because the fine cotton trade is so much injured since the year 1838, in consequence of the ladies altering the fashion of their dresses; that is to say,

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wearing long dresses, so that the insteps are not seen. If a lady's instep were seen, she would take care to wear a good stocking, and if she walked to church and soiled her stocking, she would, when she got home, put another pair on; this pair would cost half-a-crown, or 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.*, whereas now ladies generally wear cloth boots and long dresses. They put on, they tell me, now a pair of what are called roundabouts; it saves a great deal of trouble in their homes and houses, for now they have almost lost all knowledge of darning; they put them on and wear them out in many cases, and then get another pair, for they can be bought for about 4*d.* a pair.

6401. Do you consider that 9*d.* a week is sufficiently remunerative for the capital invested in a frame?—I should think it is; the reason why I cannot make the rent of my frames profitable is, because I have so many lying down; but the trade is subject to this fickleness, and therefore frames are a bad investment.

6402. Then you concur with Mr. Cartwright's evidence, taken before the Commissioner; he is asked whether he considers the amount of 9*d.* a week for narrow frames fairly remunerative for the interest of capital embarked in machinery; and he says, "I should think so"?—In answer to that, I would tell you what such a frame would have cost me in 1836; if I bought a good carcass in 1836, I paid 8*l.* for it, and I could show you in my books, which I have here, plenty of cases in which I paid 8*l.* for a carcass.

6403. It is your opinion that 9*d.* is sufficient?—Yes; I consider it would be fair.

6404. If the hosiers were to charge 1*s.*, you would consider it exorbitant, would you not?—I am aware why you ask me that question, because it is done at Leicester and Hinckley. At Leicester their reason is this, and it is a good reason too: I was 25 years in the worsted trade as well as the cotton; now, if a person is at work upon worsted, or angola, or any of those hard materials with animal wool in them, they cannot work it dry; if they were to work it dry, it would curdle, or what we technically call slurgall, and that makes a rough face, which roughness would often cause unsoundness, and as the material is worked damp, it rusts the sinkers and the needles, and therefore they wear faster.

6405. Sir *H. Halford.*] That applies to worsted?—Yes, and angola, and all animal wool.

6406. At Hinckley they work cotton, and charge a shilling?—They work cotton, and charge a shilling; perhaps they work some worsted too; but I believe it is principally cotton.

6407. *Chairman.*] As regards Hinckley, do you think that the extra 3*d.* is more than is necessary to be taken for the rent of a frame, it being the same manufacture as is carried on at Lougborough?—I should have thought that they might have done with 9*d.* at Hinckley.

6408. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it the same manufacture at Hinckley as at Loughborough?—Their frames are coarser than ours.

6409. *Chairman.*] They are cotton stockings, are they not?—Yes, and generally 21 and 22-gauge frames.

6410. Mr. *Mundy.*] Then if any difference exists, they ought to be lower, should they not?—I fancy the 21-gauge frame is charged pretty much like the 24; I cannot say so much about it as I should desire; the 24-gauge frame has 24 jacks in the three inches, and a 27, 27; a 30, 30, and so on; so when the framesmith is at work, he has to make so many more the farther he goes.

6411. *Chairman.*] I understand from you, who know both the worsted and the cotton trade, from having been engaged in both, that in the worsted trade a frame sustains more injury from wear and tear than it does in the cotton?—Yes; that applies to the worsted or the angola trade, where it is necessary that the material should be damped with a soap lather, or anything else that will soften it.

6412. Is it the case, that in the worsted trade there is more considerable wear and tear than there is in the cotton?—Surely.

6413. And therefore, for that reason, you think 1*s.* in the worsted trade is not more than 9*d.* would be in the cotton trade?—I think it is not; and if you would not mind giving me a moment's patience, I should wish to say this: if the sinkers wear, the frame must go through what is called a regular mould, and that is a great expense; the jacks, moulding, and so on, are very expensive.

sive. A framesmith's bill is a very long bill indeed; there is so much for setting up, &c. &c.

6414. You are acquainted with the Nottingham silk manufacture in Loughborough, are you not?—No, I have never manufactured it.

6415. That trade is not carried on in Loughborough?—No; I have very fine cotton gauges; the 44-gauge, which is very fine

6416. But the silk trade of Nottingham is not carried on in Loughborough?—No; the silk trade is considered what they call a three-needle.

6417. Lord *J. Manners.*] When you were in a larger way of business, did you employ middlemen?—To say I never employed a middleman would be to say wrong; but I have done so very little indeed, and that is many years ago.

6418. When you were in a larger way of business, you did not find it absolutely necessary to employ middlemen?—No; we had more assistants, more partners, and so on.

6419. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The employment of middlemen is merely a substitute for the employment of some taker-in, is it not?—Several takers-in.

6420. Is it not a question with a manufacturer, whether he will have takers-in or employ middlemen?—Clearly so.

6421. And do you draw the deduction that, because he employs middlemen, it is probably less costly to him to do so than to employ takers-in?—I think a hosier would do his work rather cheaper through a middleman; he would work rather cheaper than a highly-paid assistant or taker-in would.

6422. Sir *H. Halford.*] The middleman having an opportunity of making his profit from the workmen?—Yes, he must be paid by the workmen, but where a middleman is employed, the workmen can work at home, and do not lose their time.

6423. You think that a middleman, with liberty to make a profit from the workmen, would work cheaper than a man paid by the manufacturer?—Cheaper than an assistant he would pay in his warehouse to take in.

6424. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would not the manufacturer be obliged to engage highly-paid assistants, and would he not also make that a question in determining the wages he should pay to his workmen?—No, I think not; because there are regular statements; our prices are all fixed as regularly as possible with respect to the widths, lengths, and everything.

6425. Then the workman pays the middleman for the saving of time that he effects by the middleman taking in his work instead of himself?—Yes, and a great many prefer working to a middleman than taking in the work themselves.

6426. Is it not the case that the middleman, under some circumstances, is necessitated, from the inability of the workman, to keep the frame in repair?—With respect to that I should say it would be the master stocking-maker, and not the middleman; if a man is not clever enough to keep his frame in repair, he invites his neighbour to come in and assist him.

6427. What is the difference between a master stocking-maker and a middleman?—A master stocking-maker is a man who, I should say, lives at home with his wife and family, as I have before described it, at a cheap small house in a village, with a small garden, and perhaps an allotment, and who keeps two or three journeymen and his family. Now, that man would suffer greatly from the abolition of the frame rent, because he would be obliged to go and work in a factory, and he could not take all his family with him, or teach his family as he does now. At present, as he lives at home, he can teach his family; if his wife should be sick he can attend to her, or she to him if he is ill. I should like to say a word about abatements; a good deal has been said about abatements from the work of the men.

6428. *Chairman.*] I understand you to say that, as regards your own business, there are no abatements but the frame rent?—Except for two years; 5 *s.* 1 ½ *d.* for bad work.

6429. But there are no other abatements?—No. Suppose we give a man a ticket that he is to make his work 24 inches long, nine foot, and suppose that man (as is commonly the case) should bring his work in only 23 inches long, and 8 ½ feet, then that man makes his hose what we call a size too little. Suppose again he should soil his work; suppose he should make it unsound, then, according to this Act, we could not make any abatement for deficient work, or

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for work not performed. If a poor man goes to a baker for a half-stone loaf, which should weigh 8 lbs., he ought, if it only weighed 7 lb., to pay for 7 lbs.

6430. But you would have a remedy before a magistrate, would you not?—There are many cases that we ought to take before the magistrates, but we never do unless it is a very flagrant case.

6431. But they would understand that there would be a summary process before a magistrate?—We should never think of taking such a case before a magistrate; we should turn the man off.

6432. Lord *J. Manners.*] What do you suppose would be the remedy of a poor man in the case of a fraudulent baker?—If he gave him 7 lbs. of bread instead of 8 lbs., of course he could go to a magistrate.

6433. How would he be better off than the manufacturer?—He would have his remedy, because the baker in that case would be giving 7 lbs. of bread instead of 8 lbs.; but if a manufacturer gives a man a ticket to do 10 *s.* worth of work, and the man makes that work deficient, and brings him but 9 *s.* worth of work, the manufacturer would be obliged to pay him 10 *s.*; he could not make any abatement. I do not want to make abatements. If my men do their work badly, I put up with it, and turn them off; that is my principle; but at the same time we should be compelled to pay the full amount agreed on and put on the ticket. The price put on the ticket is the agreement, and if the man's work was deficient, we could get no remedy without going before a magistrate.

6434. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of the Act called the "Arbitration Act"?—Yes.

6435. Did you ever know it put into exercise?—I never did. If a manufacturer were to impose on a workman, he could complain before a magistrate, and the case could be tried.

6436. It could be referred to arbitration according to the Act?—Yes.

6437. But that is never done?—No, it would be a toilsome and troublesome thing; these things could not be practised. I quite approve of there being such an Act, and I think that in flagrant cases it ought to be put into execution.

6438. Mr. *Gardner.*] What Act do you say you approve of?—The Arbitration Act.

6439. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you not think it would be a good thing if there were some easy mode of arbitration in cases of that sort?—I do not see how a manufacturer could find time to go all through these things; I think that if the workmen do not perform their work in a proper manner, the only way is to part with them.

Mr. *Thomas Turner*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *T. Turner.*

6440. Mr. *Gardner.*] YOU are a middleman?—Yes.

6441. Where do you live?—At Sharnford.

6442. Where is that?—Four miles from Hinckley, and 11 from Leicester.

6443. In what department of the trade are you?—The old-fashioned wrought, altogether; that branch alone.

6444. What kind of frames are employed?—Narrow frames.

6445. That is the worst paid branch, I believe?—The worst paid branch in the trade.

6446. How many frames have you?—One hundred and fifty hands, I employ.

6447. Then, in fact, you are one of the largest, if not the largest, middleman having narrow frames, in the county?—As a middleman.

6448. Can you tell the Committee how many of those 150 frames are worked by men, and how many by women and children?—The number of hands employed by me is 150; 52 stocking-makers, men hands; 43 stocking-makers, children; 25 agricultural labourers' wives; and 30 agricultural labourers' children.

6449. Can you give us any average of the wages that these people get, men, women, and children?—There is a great variety of classes among the wrought hands, but I have got a few specimens for the whole month of May; I thought I could not do anything more satisfactory.

6450. Is

6450. Is that the paper that was put in from you, by Mr. Corah?—It is.

6451. You cannot give us an average, can you?—I do not know that I can, exactly; I should say, from 5 *s.* to 12 *s.*

6452. I do not know that you are aware that great complaints have been made of the exactions practised by the middlemen?—I am quite aware of it.

6453. Will you state, shortly, your defence, if you have one to make?—Yes; I have lived in Sharnford for 26 years, and during that time I have employed a great many hands in that parish and others, and I can say this also, that there is not one hand from that time to the present moment who has ever wanted one day's work; they have been fully employed during those 26 years without one exception; I keep a conveyance, a horse and a van, for the sole purpose of conveying my goods to Leicester, and fetching the materials back a distance of 11 miles, and for all my trouble and anxiety, and responsibility (for I am accountable for every ounce of stuff I fetch out of Leicester, to make it all good at Christmas, at the year's end), I have 10 *d.* in the pound; that includes all charges.

6454. Then, in the charge which figures here on the paper put in by Mr. Corah, and signed by your name, the carriage means all the charges that you make?—All the charges.

6455. And those charges amount altogether to 10 *d.* in the pound?—Yes; if these hands had to fetch their work from Leicester, it would be the loss of a day's work to them, for their families at home would be doing nothing, and there would be their expenses. It is very evident that, instead of being an injury to the workpeople, I am a great advantage to them. I could not do this except by employing a great number; it would not answer my purpose.

6456. You have been employed as a middleman for 26 years; have you personally had any complaints made to you of the hardship of the system?—Never once; and there was never any charge brought against me in my life.

6457. Then are these complaints got up?—A good deal by agitators; my hands told me last Saturday, when they brought in their work, that Buckby and Elliott had been at Stony Stanton among them, to try to get up a case; some others have been there at different times, but they have always failed; my hands respect me too much; they have been used well.

6458. Buckby and Elliott are two persons who have been examined before this Committee?—Yes.

6459. What made Messrs. Buckby and Elliott go to your hands to try to get up a case?—I do not know whether they get their living by it, or how it is.

6460. Of course you are acquainted with the proceedings of other middlemen; do you consider that the charges which you make are about the average charges in the trade?—As far as I have a knowledge of the villages round me; of course I cannot answer to any great extent; but I have never heard and have no knowledge of the extravagancies that have been represented; things to me, as far as my knowledge serves me, have been greatly exaggerated. I think that no honest man and no man of any principle could act such a part.

6461. I see you describe your charges by the term "carriage;" do you mean to say that 10 *d.* in the pound is the charge for the carriage of the material backwards and forwards, and for nothing else?—Yes.

6462. What becomes of the other charges we hear of as being made; charges for lighting and thread, and I do not know what else; seaming, and all kinds of things?—I do not make anything of that; the workmen generally have their frames at home; perhaps there is a man and his wife, and two or three children, and they are on the spot with a little garden and an allotment; they have it at home; they do it in their own house; they wind their own yarn, and do their seaming, and so on, generally themselves; it is a domestic manufacture.

6463. In the case of this domestic manufacture, as you call it, the charges of the middleman resolve themselves into remuneration for his labour in carrying the material to and from Leicester, and becoming responsible for it?—Yes.

6464. And there are no other charges in existence?—No other charges.

6465. You would be of opinion, then, I suppose, that an Act of Parliament for the purpose of putting an end to rents and charges would be an evil?—Yes.

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6466. What do you think would be the effect of the net systems?—I know that the alteration proposed has been circulated about among my hands, and I know that to a man they would rather pay direct than indirect; they are well aware that if such a law as has been proposed were to come in force, the rent must be paid either directly or indirectly, therefore it must be by reducing the wages; and they conceive they would be worse off, which I am sadly afraid they would be.

6467. You mean, in fact, to say, that your hands prefer to have their wages paid on the present system of stoppages from their wages, rather than run the risk of having them directly lowered in a greater ratio?—Yes, they are afraid that that would be the result of such a change as has been proposed.

6468. Do you mean that that is the opinion of one or two hands, or that it is the opinion of your hands generally?—It is the opinion of my hands generally; I do not believe that one out of the 150 I employ would say to the contrary; they are well satisfied with me, and I with them. I have many hands who have worked for me above 20 years, and we are on as good terms now as we were the first day I employed them.

6469. What is the opinion of your hands as to the system generally; would they like to have it changed by Act of Parliament?—No; they would like to go on as they are now. From all I have heard from every quarter, the general feeling is, that they would rather go on as they are now than have the alteration proposed.

6470. What I wanted to ask you was, what would be the effect of a net system of wages; first of all, upon the wages of a good workman?—He would be a material sufferer; those that are of most importance to the master and who take the best care of the machinery, would suffer the most. One hand shall make three dozen or four dozen of 3*s.* 6*d.* stockings, and another two dozen only, and he shall seem to work as hard as the man who makes four dozen. We must have the rent and charges; so I make a bargain with a man for a certain class of work. I say to him, "Instead of 3*s.* 6*d.*, I shall give you 3*s.*" Then the hands that do such a small quantity of work would not meet the case; therefore the swiftest and best hand would have to pay in part for the inferior hand.

6471. In fact, the slow or idle hand would probably be a gainer by it?—Yes.

6472. That is, supposing the wages are not reduced?—Yes.

6473. But the industrious hands would be sufferers?—Yes; and it would cause a great deal of dissatisfaction.

6474. Do you think that there would be any security in the case of frames scattered about the villages, against their being worked for other people than the owners, in case of the abolition of rents and charges?—No; there would be no security at all; and I fear it would be very much practised.

6475. To whom do you chiefly work?—I work a hundred frames for Mr. Corah, of Leicester, and I have done so for 26 years.

6476. Are you at all acquainted with Mr. Corah's practice?—As far as I am concerned.

6477. Are you aware whether it is Mr. Corah's practice to take full rent in case of sickness?—No, I never heard of such a thing being done; I heard him deny it the other day.

6478. Are you aware that this statement has been contradicted by a person named Stevens?—Yes; I heard something about it; I beg to say something about Stevens. The husband of this woman, Stevens, and one of the children, some four years ago, came to me for work in a most distressed state; I pitied their situation, and set them to work; I set them three frames, and gave them full work; they had not worked to me long before they embezzled my stuff.

6479. Are you sure you are speaking of the same person?—Yes; Mary Stevens, the wife of William Stevens; and I heard that this Mr. Buckby went to Stevens the other day; he made a complaint to Buckby respecting my keeping rent when he was ill, and I immediately referred to my own book, and found I had not had rent for many weeks when he was ill, and this man had sold my stuff, spoilt my work, and spoilt my machine; that is, the husband of Mary Stevens.

6480. The

6480. The husband of the woman who brings a charge against Mr. Corah embezzled your stuff, you say?—Yes, and I turned them off; they stand in my book to this day.

6481. Did this woman work for you?—Yes, considerably, and a very saucy bad woman she is; she is a wicked woman, wretched; she will swear, or anything; she will swear you out of anything, almost. They might have had employment with me to this day if they had been principled, but instead of that he has had to break stones in the pits at Stony Stanton till the last few weeks.

6482. Are you able, of your own knowledge, to say what the practice of Mr. Corah is, as to taking full rent in cases of sickness?—I know he has never acted so to me, and never attempted anything of the sort. I have seen nothing but straightforwardness and gentlemanlike dealing on his part, so far as I know of.

6483. Different statements have been made as to the amount of labour which is done in the hosiery districts by these knitters; what should you yourself consider to be the average, where wages are lamentably low?—If you will be kind enough to look at the paper which I have here (*producing a paper*), taken from my stocking-makers' book, you will find a statement of a month's work for each individual; there is the full work, the carriage, what is taken, and what is left; as far as I can judge, taking the whole, it is from 5 *s.* to 12 *s.*

6484. What is the average number of hours of labour?—I should say ten hours a day; there is a good deal of time that some do not employ as it might be employed, and there are many again who work 12 and 14 hours a day; but I should say that, on the average, ten hours was the outside.

6485. They complain that this idleness is not voluntary, and say that they are often not supplied with stuff till late in the week?—That is not the case with my workmen; they are always in full work, and, as a whole, employ their time well.

6486. And do they work regular hours, as other operatives do?—Yes, I have nothing to complain of; they are about as respectable a set of poor people as there are about, and it would do anybody good on the Sabbath-day to see them so comfortably clad when they are going to places of worship. I never saw a boy or a girl during the whole 26 years without shoes and stockings, but they are comfortable, although they are so miserably paid; they make the best use of their time, and employ their money properly.

6487. The feeling of that portion of the population, you say, is against any change in the law?—It is.

6488. And you have given me the names of two persons who you think will give evidence to that effect?—Scores of them would do so.

6489. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say you have given to the honourable Member the names of two workmen who you say would come here and give evidence?—Yes.

6490. And that there are several more who would do the same?—Yes.

6491. Has there been any meeting of the workmen upon the subject?—No.

6492. What are the names of these two parties?—William Bray and William Townshend.

6493. Who do they work under?—They work direct to me.

6494. Then of course the statement that you have given of the satisfaction which your workmen feel from working under you these two men would corroborate?—Yes.

6495. But they could tell nothing more than you have told us?—No.

Jovis, 21° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Packe.	Mr. Biggs.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Ingham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Cheetham.
Sir Henry Halford.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Cobbett.	

CHARLES WILLIAM PACKE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Arthur Morley*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *A. Morley.*

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6496. *Chairman.*] YOU were not examined before Mr. Muggeridge, the Commissioner, I believe?—I was not.

6497. I see that, among the witnesses, there are two gentlemen of your name; are you of the firm of John & Richard Morley, of Nottingham?—Yes.

6498. Are you extensively engaged in the hosiery trade?—Yes, we are.

6499. In what branch?—In the wrought-hose branch.

6500. Is that worsted, or cotton and silk?—It applies to the mode of making them; we are chiefly employed in cotton and silk.

6501. Have you been engaged for many years in the manufacture of the finer qualities of silk stockings?—Yes, the firm has.

6502. What number of frames have you in your employment?—Of our own, above 1,700.

6503. Do you employ any frames besides your own?—Yes, a good many; above a thousand.

6504. Those are what are called independent frames?—Yes.

6505. Do you receive rents for those frames that are your own?—Yes.

6506. And do you receive rents for the independent frames also?—No.

6507. Is your business carried on through the agency of middlemen?—Yes, to a great extent; we have a great many hands who work direct to us besides, and who work their own frames; but in a business the extent of ours, we are compelled to have a middleman, that is to say, a man standing between us and the workmen.

6508. What proportion of your workmen work direct to the warehouse?—I am not able to answer that question exactly, but perhaps a fourth of them.

6509. Are the other three-fourths under middlemen?—Yes; we have a good many men who work in the way Mr. Ratcliffe endeavoured to describe, and whom he called master stocking-makers, that is, men who have four or five frames; a man who works in a frame himself and superintends a few others, he called a master stocking-maker; we have a great many of that sort, a man and his family working together.

6510. To whom do the workmen pay rents for the independent frames?—Those who own their own frames do not pay any rent at all, so I cannot answer that question; we know nothing at all about rent for independent frames; those who own frames pay no rent at all for them.

6511. Does any large portion of the 1,000 independent frames that you have mentioned belong to the workmen themselves?—A good many respectable workmen, who have worked for us for many years, will save a little money, and buy a frame or two, and we employ those frames in addition to our own.

6512. Can you say whether those workmen who are in possession of their own frames are able to obtain employment for them, as well as workmen who rent frames?—I should say not as a rule.

6513. When trade is slack, they would be the last to be employed, would they not?—Yes, generally they are.

6514. Then

6514. Then do you think it better or not for a workman that he should possess his own frame?—I think it is better for him that he should not, chiefly because he cannot keep it in so good a state of repair as a hosier or manufacturer can.

6515. What is your custom as to the charge made for frame-rent per week?—We charge nine-pence per week for frames under 30 gauge, and a shilling for 30 gauge and upwards; that is for what we call narrow frames, 16 inches wide; it varies in wider frames; that has been the custom with us, and I believe with the Nottingham hosiers generally, for more than half a century.

6516. There are a vast number of workmen, I apprehend, in Nottingham, and around, who are depending upon your manufacture?—Yes; a great many.

6517. Are there any manufacturers in Nottingham who work on a different system with reference to frame rent?—I am not aware of any. You are speaking of the hosiery manufacture, are you not?

6518. Yes?—I am not aware of any.

6519. You are not aware of any one manufacturer in Nottingham who works on a different system?—No; I have not heard of one.

6520. Has there been any dissatisfaction expressed among the workmen in Nottingham and the neighbourhood upon the subject of the payment of frame rent?—Speaking with regard to ourselves (for I can only speak about our own workmen), I have not heard the least complaint in the world.

6521. Are they subject to any other charges besides the frame rent in your manufacture?—They pay what are called shop charges to the middlemen, which are uniform charges, which are well understood, and which have existed from time immemorial.

6522. The workmen perfectly well understand when they enter upon their work what deductions will be made?—Perfectly.

6523. What are those deductions for?—I cannot say from memory; I am not acquainted with them.

6524. Supposing an average able-bodied and industrious workman has full work for the week, what would be his gross earnings?—That is a question which has been often put to me, but which I never could answer; for there is such a variety of skill in the trade that one man will earn 10*s.* or 15*s.* easily, when another man would not earn half the money.

6525. But what would be the average?—I am not able to answer the question; but I should think from 12*s.* to 15*s.*; it is a subject to which I really have paid no attention at all.

6526. Are you aware at all what, after the deductions have been made, the net wages would be to the workman?—Those would be the net wages after he has paid every thing.

6527. An average workman, fully employed, would earn about that sum?—I am speaking now of an able-bodied and intelligent workman.

6528. Are women and children much employed in your manufacture?—Yes, very much.

6529. Are your frames let, not only to the master of the family, but also to his wife, and other branches of the family in the same house?—No, never; the frames are always let to the master of the family.

6530. There is no more than one frame, then, in one family to whom a frame is let; is that so?—If the son of a workman is married, and leaves his family, we frequently let him have his frame himself, and he takes it with him; but so long as he remains under his father's roof, the father alone is answerable to us for the frame. We have many cases of different members of the same family having frames directly from us, but they do not live under the same roof.

6531. Is your manufacture confined to stockings, or are you also a glove manufacturer?—We manufacture gloves as well as stockings.

6532. Is not some part of the glove manufacture considerably trying to the eyes?—I am not aware that it is more so than other manufactures; I never heard it spoken of as such.

6533. Is there nothing trying to the eyes in making the fingers of the gloves?—I am not aware that there is anything more than there is in the making of silk or thread stockings of the same quality.

6534. There is a different sort of manufacture in making the fingers and the

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hands of the gloves, is there not?—The mode of making them is the same; the frame is the same, and the material is the same; the frame has to be a little altered, but it is worked in the same way.

6535. Have you read the evidence which was taken before Mr. Muggeridge in 1844?—I have not.

6536. I see that in the evidence of a person of the name of Edward Battles, a framework-knitter, in the plain silk glove branch, in answer to Question No. 247, "Have you ever worked at the finger frame?" he says, "Yes, I have." He is then asked, "Have you worked of late years at it?" and he says, "No; when our eyesight fails a little, we cannot see to finger." In the next question he is asked, "Is it very trying to the eyes?" and he says, "Yes, it is." In that statement, then, I presume you do not agree?—I give no opinion upon that subject, one way or the other; I was not aware of it; I have never heard it spoken of before; the same thing might be said of making stockings; the narrowing part of the work is more trying to the eyes than the plain work is.

6537. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I suppose that observation equally applies when the stockings are very fine?—Yes; for the making of gloves the frame is divided into compartments, and the smaller the compartment of a frame, the more trying it is to the eye.

6538. Does the workman, in consequence of that objection to the work, get an equivalent in the shape of a higher rate of wages for the performance of that kind of labour?—I am sure I do not know, for I never heard the subject discussed at all; we never have any difficulty whatever in getting the fingering frames worked; there is never any objection raised; where a man has a shop of frames, some of the parties working in them will be making hands and some will be making fingers; he apportions the work as he chooses.

6539. Are the earnings of the workmen in the finer departments of the hose generally better or more remunerative than in the inferior description?—Yes, decidedly.

6540. *Chairman.*] Do you think that the factory system would be a better system of carrying on your trade than the present system of frame rent?—Certainly not.

6541. Are you in the habit, when trade is slack, of giving out short work?—No, we never give out short work; it is a standing rule in the warehouse never to give out less than full work.

6542. When your workmen have work at all, there is always full work for them for the week?—Yes, there is generally enough for a fortnight; we do not encourage them to come in weekly, for we find it a great disadvantage to the men; those men who work direct to us, we encourage to stop out for a fortnight.

6543. There are sometimes slack times when the frames are standing still, are there not?—If a frame stands still, no charge is made at all.

6544. Then the workmen never pay frame rent unless they have their week's work?—Certainly not.

6545. Never?—Never.

6546. Suppose they are unable to work from sickness or other disability, do you take full rent?—No, we do not. That question has been a good deal discussed since this inquiry has been opened; as far as we are concerned, we have no rule upon the subject at all; I wish the Committee thoroughly to understand that our practice is not to take rent in such cases, but each case is governed by its own merits. If a person comes to us and says, "I have been ill, and have not been able to work," we investigate the case; if it turns out that the person is one who has worked for us many years, and if we have reason to believe that he is trustworthy, we make him an allowance; but in the case of a stranger, we have an examination; in every case, however, in which we make an allowance, the workman considers it a gratuity to him; he looks upon it as an act of grace, and not as a matter of right.

6547. It is your practice, you say, when you have been well satisfied that a workman has been ill, not to take the rent?—It is.

6548. I understand you to say, that the master of the family is the only person who has a frame; you let no frame to the wife or children?—No; the wife and children are not responsible to us generally.

6549. Do they do any portion of work in assisting the man who has the frame?—

ame?—They will work the frames; a man will take, perhaps, six, or eight, ten frames from us; and his wife and children, according to their ability, will ork them the same as he does himself; but we can only hold one man himself sponsible; we only see the man; we do not see any of the rest of the family; ie father comes to the warehouse and takes the work from us; he brings it in, id is responsible to us for the frames.

6550. Mr. *Cheetham.*] He may have, in addition to his wife and children, an prentice or journeymen; but you only know him as the principal?—Yes.

6551. And where he employs a journeyman, you call him a master stocking-aker?—Yes, if he works in the frame himself, and overlooks a few others.

6552. That is the distinction between him and a middleman?—Yes, although middleman" is, in fact, the generic term for all of them. I consider every an who stands between the employer and the workman a middleman.

6553. *Chairman.*] But with regard to the fourth part of your workmen, who, ou say, work direct to your warehouse, there is only one frame given to each mily?—To each individual. We have many cases in which a man works lone; and then in another case there will be two, a man and his son, or a man nd his wife; that would be two frames, and then the man brings the work in. Ve have many cases of that sort.

6554. Do you know how early children begin to work, or how early they can ork in a frame?—We very much discourage their beginning under 12 years f age, but I believe there are instances of their beginning earlier than that; have heard of their beginning at 10 or 11 years old, but we do not like it, and reatly discourage it.

6555. Is there any difference made in the rent charged for a frame, whether t is worked by weak and young hands, or by an able-bodied man?—Not at ll; they are all charged alike.

6556. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that the system of frame rents can be bolished with advantage by Act of Parliament?—I should say not, decidedly.

6557. Will you have the goodness to explain to the Committee why you think ot?—In the first place, looking at it in the abstract, I do not think that Parliament can properly be called upon to interfere in such a matter, because he arrangement which is made is a voluntary one, entered into between people of sound mind, who have a right to make what arrangements they like; I annot at all understand why the powers of Parliament should be invoked upon such an occasion; that is looking at it, as I have said, in the abstract. These wrought-hose frames are spread all over the country; we have them in the remotest parts of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire; we let them to these persons, and we should not have any tie or claim on them unless we took the rent; it is the only remuneration we receive for the capital we have invested in those frames.

6558. There is an impression in some quarters that rents might be abolished with advantage, and that a net system might be introduced in lieu of it; will you be kind enough to give the Committee your ideas upon that subject?—My idea upon that subject is this: that by the paying of the frame rent there is a great encouragement given to the skilful and industrious man, because the more he works the more he earns; whereas if frame rents are abolished, wages, in consequence of their abolition will be reduced, and the man who does most work will suffer most by the reduction.

6559. Will you explain, if you please, why there must necessarily be a reduction of wages?—Because we should have no return for the capital we have invested in machinery if we were to let a man have a frame without paying any rent for it.

6560. You think, then, that the adoption of a net system and the abolition of frame rents are impracticable?—I do.

6561. You are aware, are you not, that there is an objection in certain quarters to the charges made by the middlemen?—Yes.

6562. Do you think that those charges could be abolished with advantage by Act of Parliament?—I do not think they could, and for the same reason that I do not think the frame rent could be abolished; I am sure that if they were, some other plan of getting it would be adopted. Now the price of making stockings is well understood, and it is tolerably uniform, especially amongst the respectable hosiers; and these charges also are well understood; whereas if they were done away with, and if the rent were done away with, each man would be allowed to make his own arrangement without there being any control on the

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part of the manufacturer; and I believe that in the end the poor workmen would suffer greatly, and would not know for weeks together what they would receive.

6563. You mean to say, that if the present system were abolished, there would be two prices; one the price paid at the warehouse, and the other the price paid by the middleman?—Yes; and not only that, but there would not be the same prices perhaps for a month together; I am persuaded there would not.

6564. It would lead, in your opinion, to confusion and to a reduction of wages?—I am certain of it, and great irregularities.

6565. What is the custom of the trade in Nottingham, to the best of your knowledge, with regard to taking rent when the frames are only half employed, or when the workmen are sick?—I do not know; but I do not think that any respectable hosier takes full rent for half work. I believe that they all act pretty much as I have stated we act in cases of sickness. I have every reason to believe it.

6566. You have been asked why you do not introduce the factory system; will you explain why it is not applicable to your business?—Our business is entirely wrought hose and the hand loom; we have no machinery worked by power; we could not introduce the frames into a factory; we should have to bring them from all parts of the three counties into the town. The difficulties would be such as we could not overcome; a stocking frame is a very small machine; each frame requires a window close down upon it; therefore to build a factory that would be safe, it would be necessary to build it at least twice as wide as would be necessary to hold the frames, for every frame must be against the window.

6567. You think there would be no advantage in it whatever?—No, I think there would be very great disadvantage in it; in fact, I never had two opinions upon the subject. When I ask the workmen what they think of the factory system, they deprecate it universally; the beauty of the stocking trade, I think, is its domestic character.

6568. You think that the system upon which the hosiery trade of Nottingham is at present carried on, is the best under the circumstances?—I do.

6569. And you do not think it can be improved by legislation?—Certainly not.

6570. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have spoken of the inconveniences that you apprehend would result from the abolition of frame rents altogether?—Yes.

6571. Do you consider that great practical inconvenience would arise, supposing an Act of Parliament were passed, preventing them from being obtained by stoppage from wages?—I do not know any other way in which the rent is to be obtained except by stoppage from wages.

6572. Could it not be obtained in the same way that the payment of other debts is obtained?—I think not; for it must be recollected that we have to deal with very poor men, and I think our only chance of obtaining the frame rent from them is to deduct it at the time when we pay them their wages.

6573. In other branches of business there are transactions with poor men, where there is no possibility of procuring payment by stoppage from wages; what peculiar inconvenience do you think would arise connected with this manufacture?—I think the inconvenience would be very great indeed to the poor men themselves; we all know it is much easier for them to pay a small sum every week than a large sum at once; a poor man will leave out of his earnings 9 *d.* or 1 *s.* a week with ease; whereas if he were to let it accumulate for three months he would find great difficulty, if not impossibility, in paying it.

6574. You say the rent is about 9*d.* a week for the ordinary sort of frames?—Yes, under 30-gauge, and 1 *s.* on 30-gauge and above.

6575. Is that the universal rent charged for frames?—I should say it is the universal rate charged in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, but I know nothing about Leicestershire. I have learnt more about it since this inquiry than I knew before, but I am not at all acquainted practically with anything that goes on in Leicestershire.

6576. From what we have heard, the rent varies in different places?—It seems to be so. I was not aware of it before; I was surprised to hear it.

6577. What is about the selling value of such a frame as is charged 9*d.* a week for?—New frames, I believe, will cost from about 15 *l.* to 16 *l.*; that is, such frames as we employ.

6578. Are

6578. Are there any new frames now constructed of that sort?—Occa- onally.

6579. There is a great difference in the value of frames, is there not?—Very eat indeed. I can form no idea of what sort of frames they speak about, when ey speak of frames that are worth about 3 *l.* or 4 *l.*; we have nothing of the rt.

6580. Do you not think there is considerable risk of exorbitant charges ing made to the workmen, owing to the facility with which stoppages are ade and rent derived?—I do not know that there is more facility for it in at than in any other transaction; if a man is determined to be dishonest he ill be so; nothing can prevent him.

6581. But, practically speaking, upon the assumption that in Leicestershire e rents charged for frames of a very inferior value is much higher than the nt charged in Nottinghamshire, does not that of itself afford evidence that ere is a power of making exorbitant charges connected with the facility of oppage from wages?—Frames in Leicestershire, I believe, wear out very much ster than they do in Nottinghamshire, so that in the long run there may not e a great difference. A frame in Nottinghamshire, such as we employ, worked a very good hand, and with good material, will go twice or three times as ng without repairs as a frame such as those which are used in Leicester- ire.

6582. Mr. *Cheetham.*] They work slower?—They work slower, and the mate- al used is better; I do not know anything about the practice in Leicestershire, ut the gentlemen engaged in that trade observe the customs and practices of ie trade the same as we do in Nottinghamshire.

6583. Mr. *Cobbett.*] How long will a frame work without requiring repair? -We consider that our frames will work about 10 years without requiring epair.

6584. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there any frames in Nottinghamshire which are ie property of middlemen?—Yes, a great many.

6585. Are you prepared to say that their charge is no higher than that which ou speak of?—I think not.

6586. When you give out materials, are they proportioned to the amount of ork capable of being executed in your own frames?—Yes; we know how many ames a man has, and we give him out a proportionate quantity of material.

6587. That is to say, you give the material out to the middleman, and he arries it to the workman?—Yes.

6588. Is there any security that that man may not have frames of his own esides those that are your own property; that he may not "run in" other ames, as it is termed?—The security would be this, that the men would very oon tell us of it; they would bring in more work than we expected, and we hould find it out in that way.

6589. And you would then correct it?—Of course we should immediately.

6590. You would not allow your middleman to distribute your materials to ther frames than your own?—Certainly not; if we knew him to do so, there ould be an instant termination of our connexion with him.

6591. Has it often happened that complaints of such conduct on his part ave been made to you?—Certainly not; because our men know the rule, and now that the law will be carried into execution.

6592. Is there a tolerably free communication between you and the work- nen working for you?—Yes, it is perfectly free at all times.

6593. That is, if any workmen were to come to you with any complaint, you ould listen to him?—Of course we should.

6594. Are you commonly acquainted with the workmen employed in exe- uting your work?—With the actual workers I am not; I am with some of hem; of course I know personally all the men who come into the warehouse; very one of them.

6595. That is, all those who work direct to you?—Yes.

6596. But with respect to those who work under middlemen, you have not he same acquaintance with them?—No; but they all of them know perfectly well that if they have any complaint to make of exorbitant charges, or if they ave any doubt as to the price they receive for their work being the proper rice, they can have access immediately to the warehouse, and a thorough explanation given to them, and redress as well.

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6597. Do you consider it part of your duty to exercise a vigilant superintendence, in order that the workmen should suffer no oppression at the hands of the middleman?—Yes, we do; and we carry it out strictly, as is well known both by middlemen and workers.

6598. You say that no respectable hosier takes full rent for half work; have you any suspicion that there are others not bearing the same character of respectability who do?—I dare not speak about anybody else; my acquaintance does not extend beyond the respectable hosiers.

6599. Is there any security that they may not do so?—No, there is not, because there is no rule; if a man wishes to be a tyrant, and to be exorbitant, there is nothing to prevent him, except the people not submitting to it.

6600. But if he has the power of stopping rent and other charges from the wages of the workman, there is nothing to prevent him from exercising that tyranny and oppression, is there?—No; but a man need not submit to it twice; he is not obliged to submit to it even once.

6601. Is not this power of oppression connected a good deal with the facility of making stoppages from wages?—I think it has no connexion whatever with it; we see the same facility for oppression in every other branch; among farmers and labouring men just the same as in the hosiery trade. I see no difference at all; if a man is disposed to oppress his workmen, he has facilities for doing it in any trade.

6602. Do you consider that the system of frame rent is attended with any profit beyond such a profit as is necessary on account of the capital invested in the machine, and the expense of keeping it in repair?—I do not.

6603. Supposing it to be attended with any indirect profit, you would consider that an abuse?—I should not consider it an abuse; I should consider it was perfectly legitimate, if the profit were even as large as it has been represented to be by the greatest advocate of this inquiry. I should think it perfectly right if they did get it, but there is no doubt that the statements that have been made respecting the profits derived from frames are greatly exaggerated.

6604. You are speaking now of Nottinghamshire?—Yes; but I believe it applies to Leicestershire also, because it is not likely that such a thing should happen. I think it carries with it its own contradiction; it is too absurd to be entertained for a moment; 100 per cent. they talk of, and even 200 per cent.; that is so out of all reason, that I am only astonished that anybody could be found to repeat such a thing.

6605. The very monstrous nature of the proposition causes you to disbelieve it?—It does; and having our own trade as a criterion to judge by, I think it is perfectly laughable.

6606. You say you have not perused Mr. Muggeridge's report?—I have not.

6607. Then if there are statements there to the effect that 1 *s.* or 1 *s.* 3 *d.* a week is demanded for a frame not worth 3 *l.*, you would think them utterly incredible?—No; I would not say they are incredible, because we have sometimes had frames, which have been worked down previous to going into a shop to be repaired, which have not been worth more than that; but to say that that would be their fixed value is ridiculous. A frame is like a coat; it wears out in time; the hosier charges as much for the frame at the end of the time as he did at the beginning; but when it is said that a frame which is not worth more than 3 *l.* pays as a general thing all that money, I say I do not believe anything of the kind.

6608. But you say you consider that if a profit can be obtained in that way, it is a legitimate profit?—I do; it is fair and above board; there is no concealment about it at all.

6609. It seems to be your opinion, then, that there may be a legitimate source of profit in the hosiery trade, apart from the profit derived from the sale of the goods manufactured?—Yes; I think that a man in business has a perfect right to get a profit wherever he can; and if he buys his frames at a cheap rate, he has a right to have the advantage of that bargain. I may buy a lot of frames from a man at 5 *l.* a piece, and if I do I get the benefit of it; whereas if I ordered them to be made, they would cost me 10 *l.* or 15 *l.*, and I should still get no more rent.

6610. Would not the effect of a profit to any considerable extent obtained in that

that way be to depress the trade very much?—I do not see that it would at all.

6611. Would it not have a depressing effect upon the price obtainable for the goods?—No; for those men who own the most frames, and who have most capital embarked in the business, are the very people who keep the prices up the best.

6612. I will take the instance of a small manufacturer, who makes a very considerable profit by frames; or I will take the instance of a middleman, who takes out goods, and makes his profit by the frames; it is a matter of indifference to him, is it not, what the price obtained by the sale of the goods is?—Yes.

6613. Would he not be tempted to cause a great deal of work to be manufactured for the sake of the profit he would derive from the frames, it being indifferent to him what price was obtained on the sale of the goods, and would not that have an exceedingly depressing effect upon the trade generally?—The profit derived from frames is so little above the ordinary profit that money ought to bear, that I do not think anybody does make goods for the sake of making such a profit.

6614. I am rather arguing on the contrary supposition, that, in some instances, the profit derived from frames may be considerable?—We may suppose almost anything; I cannot argue on a supposed case of that kind; but, judging by the fact that frames do not yield such a profit as has been supposed, I do not believe that any frames are employed for the sake of the profit derived from the rent of them.

6615. You think that profit, when it can be obtained, is a legitimate profit?—Yes.

6616. Seeing that that profit is obtainable by stoppages from wages, and that those stoppages may be arbitrarily made, is it not probable that that depressing cause may operate to a considerable extent?—It is possible that sufficient profit may be obtained from frames to induce people to employ them, but to so small an extent as not to affect the price of goods; I do not believe it is done to that extent.

6617. Mr. *Ingham.*] Is it the fact that stoppages are arbitrarily made?—They are not arbitrary, for they are so well understood that no man thinks of inquiring what the charges are before he takes a frame.

6618. Mr. *Biggs.*] You mean to say that, instead of their being arbitrary, they are uniformly and generally known?—If I understood Sir Henry Halford's question, it was whether the profit derived from frame rent was so great as to induce people to employ frames for the sake of that profit, and thus to cause an unnatural quantity of goods to be made. My answer is, that it is possible to do it, and probably it is done, but to so small an extent as not to affect the general interests of trade.

6619. You are speaking from your own observation and experience, are you not, rather than from a general acquaintance with the practices in the trade?—Yes; I do not profess to know more than my own affairs.

6620. And you have not perused the evidence, or looked to the result of that very elaborate and particular inquiry that was made by Mr. Muggeridge, the commissioner?—No, I have not.

6621. Are you aware that in Leicestershire it is generally the case that the manufacturers disclaim the notion that they have any control over, or acquaintance with, the proceedings of the middlemen?—I have heard so during this inquiry, and I was surprised to hear it.

6622. Do you not think that it may be attended with a good deal of oppression as against the workmen, if the middlemen are left entirely to their own devices and practices with regard to their own profit?—I do think so; I only hope that the Leicestershire hosiers will follow our example, and exercise a more direct supervision and interference between the workmen and middlemen; I think that that would be productive of great benefit, and that it would do much more good than any Act of Parliament.

6623. Do you not think it would be a considerable check to such oppressive practices as may prevail among middlemen if they were prevented by law from making stoppages from wages?—I think they would do something else which would in the end be more injurious. I am quite convinced that the manufacturers of Leicester have it in their own power to put a stop to these things that are complained of, and it is their duty to do so.

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6624. But it does not appear that they exercise that power?—No; they conduct their business in a different way to what we do, and I am sorry for it. I am surprised to hear it.

6625. And in the meantime, the workmen may be subject to great oppression?—They may, certainly.

6626. Mr. *Gardner.*] But you think, do you not, that even if this system were put a stop to, they would have it in their power to reduce the wages of the workmen in the same proportion, or even more?—Certainly; but I do not believe half that is stated about the Leicestershire hosiers.

6627. Lord *J. Manners.*] I understand you to say, that you hold yourself always ready to investigate any complaints that may be made by the workmen as to exorbitant deductions on the part of middlemen?—I do.

6628. Have you ever had occasion to investigate such complaints?—I cannot call to mind more than one case of the kind: there was a few years ago a very great strike in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, which lasted several weeks, and then everything was trumped up that could be possibly imagined, and many charges were made to us against our middlemen; we determined to investigate them, and had the parties face to face in our warehouse, when the charges all fell to the ground; they were perfectly untrue and could not be substantiated.

6629. As the result of that investigation, I conclude you arrived at the knowledge of what the ordinary charges and deductions made by the middlemen were?—We arrived at this conclusion; we found out that the charges were uniform; that the men knew what they were before they went, and that in village after village they were doing pretty much the same.

6630. Then I suppose you found out what those charges were, did you not?—I believe I did then, but I have quite forgotten what they were; I am not able to say what they are now; I cannot remember them.

6631. What was the impression left on your mind at that time; you investigated the subject fully, I suppose?—Yes, but I feel a great reluctance to state what my impression is for fear I should make a mistake; I know that what I am saying will be canvassed a good deal in our county, and when I come to figures I may make a mistake; therefore I should feel reluctant even to give an opinion beyond a general one, which is, that I believe the charges are uniform and regular, and that every man knows what they will be before he goes to work.

6632. I think you have said that about one-fourth of the people you employ work direct to your warehouse?—I should think so.

6633. Are they subject to any shop charges and deductions?—No; a man who works a frame direct to the warehouse is subject to nothing, unless he has to put his frame in some other place; if he has accommodation for it in his own house, he has nothing to pay anybody, except ordinary things.

6634. You were prepared, of course, to give evidence before this Committee?—No.

6635. You received a summons?—I did.

6636. You were aware that you would be examined as to the general arrangements of the trade?—Yes.

6637. Did it not strike you that probably you would be asked questions as to these shop charges and deductions?—I did not suppose I should, because it does not come within my province at all; I expected I should be asked general questions, but not particular ones; I did not expect to be called on to give a minute account of the shop charges, but merely to testify to the fact that the charges are understood, that they are uniform, and that if they are at all infringed upon there is redress to be had at the warehouse.

6638. How do you know that the charges are uniform, and that they are never infringed on, if you do not know what they are?—Because I frequently make inquiries.

6639. Having made those inquiries, can you give the Committee the result of your investigation?—I have not made inquiries since I received a summons to appear here as a witness, but we constantly make inquiries, and ask our men if they have any complaints to make, or if there is anything going on wrong; we put a general question to the workmen, "Have you any complaints to make?"

6640. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are aware of the provisions of the Ticket Act, I presume?—Yes.

6641. Do you consider that there are any reasonable objections that can be made to a compliance with the provisions of that Act?—The great objections are the immense trouble and difficulty attending a compliance with it, the time it would take, and the position in which it would place the workmen.

6642. How is it that it would be attended with so much trouble?—It requires you to put down a minute description of a stocking, from the top to the bottom; it begins with its length and width, all the narrowings, the heel, the toe, the number of the cotton, the weight they are to be, and the price to be paid, and other particulars.

6643. Is it not very desirable that the workmen should be acquainted with all those particulars?—They are acquainted with them practically now. If you give a man cotton out, he knows he has to make a stocking a certain length; he does not care to an ounce or two what the weight is.

6644. Do you not think that the absence of any written agreement would give great facility to the less worthy of the employers to take advantage of the workmen?—Of course; but then in practice they do not take that advantage.

6645. You do not do it I am aware, but I am speaking of others; there are many other employers who do not conduct their business as you do, I am afraid?—It is possible there are, but the stocking-makers did not wish the Ticket Act to be carried out; they said it would give them so much trouble that they would rather not have it.

6646. That applies to some of the workmen employed by you?—Yes; the fact is that we never attempted it; we did not make a beginning; we did not even try it.

6647. Your workmen being thoroughly satisfied with your mode of conducting business, there was no occasion for it?—No.

6648. Mr. *Mundy.*] Your frames are scattered over different villages in the counties of Nottingham and Derby, are they not?—Yes.

6649. What places in Derbyshire?—Almost in every village in Derbyshire, but very much at Smalley, and Horsley Woodhouse and Heanor, and we go up as far as very near to Bakewell.

6650. Do you conduct your business there through the intervention of middlemen?—Yes, just in the same way as it is conducted at Nottingham; but we go to Heanor once a fortnight to meet the men; we have a little warehouse there to take the goods in.

6651. You do not require a middleman then at Heanor?—We are in precisely the same position in that respect as we are in Nottinghamshire, but we go to Heanor to take the goods in; we have our own place, and there we receive the goods.

6652. Have you ever had any complaints from the villages you mention?—I do not remember that we have had the least complaint; we never have any complaint from our own workpeople; the complaints that we hear are from other parties, who have nothing to do with the matter, and who trump up complaints. We never had a complaint from our workmen within my recollection; not a serious complaint; nothing but some trifling thing or other that could be rectified in a few minutes.

6653. The workmen have an opportunity of seeing you if they wish to do so, and of telling you any complaints they may have?—Every one of them, and they all know it.

6654. They can come to you if they choose?—Yes.

6655. In a more remote district how do you manage; I suppose you cannot see them?—No; sometimes we go to them, and we find that the workmen all know the prices as accurately as we do ourselves; every man in the place knows them, and the middlemen are so well aware that this is the case that they do not desire, nor do they attempt, to pay the men a less price than they receive. I do not know a case in which that has been done.

6656. *Chairman.*] Do I understand you to say that the workmen who work to middlemen invariably know the warehouse prices?—Invariably; they know the warehouse prices as well as the middlemen themselves.

6657. Do not the middlemen work for more than one manufacturer?—Our middlemen do not.

6658. But are there not middlemen in the Nottingham trade who do?—There are.

6659. Where they work for more than one warehouse, is it not frequently difficult

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difficult for the workmen to understand for what manufacturer they are working?—Sometimes they do not know, but generally they do; if they take the trouble to inquire they may easily know.

6660. In the evidence given before Mr. Muggeridge workmen state that, in consequence of their working to middlemen who work to different warehouses, they do not know what the warehouse price is?—It is their fault if they do not know; they might know if they would take the trouble to inquire.

6661. Sir *H. Halford.*] Suppose a middleman were to pay a different price to the workmen from that which he receives at the warehouse, you would consider that he was guilty of a great injustice, would you not?—I should: it would be a gross fraud.

6662. He is bound to pay them the same price as he himself receives from the warehouse, is he not?—He is bound to do so.

6663. Deriving his profit in another way?—In the usual way; that is, from his proper charges.

6664. *Chairman.*] I think you say that with the respectable part of the trade at Nottingham there is no such thing as stint?—No, I did not say so; I say we have no such thing in our business, and I do not think it is practised now among the more respectable hosiers; it is found to be a bad thing in practice to stint the workmen; they give them either full work, or none at all.

6665. I see that a framework-knitter, of the name of Kerry, was examined before Mr. Muggeridge; do you know him?—No.

6666. He is asked in Question No. 311, "Have you been subject to stint?" and his answer is, "Yes; in fact you may almost say that it is almost all stint, for when there is plenty of work they give us a stint on purpose to get more rent; that is, if you want a few more gloves to do, and they give it you, you must pay extra rent for it." Do you know whether that is likely to occur in any house in Nottingham?—I am sure I cannot tell; it is impossible to say; those things occasionally happen, but I do not think they happen so often as has been represented.

6667. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would a manufacturer who had a pressing demand for goods, deliver less work out to the workmen for the sake of obtaining additional rent?—Certainly not; I do not believe that rent is taken into consideration by respectable manufacturers. I do not believe that they employ their frames for the sake of rent at all.

6668. Mr. *Gardner.*] You consider that the practice of stint is bad, in a business point of view?—I do; and I think that all men who conduct their business well do not stint.

6669. *Chairman.*] Do you know Mr. William Hannay?—I do.

6670. He was examined before Mr. Muggeridge; he was formerly, I think, engaged in the hosiery trade?—I believe he was.

6671. That business is now conducted by Messrs. Cox, Horner & Hogg, is it not?—Yes.

6672. Is that firm now in existence at Nottingham?—Yes.

6673. I see, in the evidence he gave before the Commissioner, in answer to this Question, No. 486, "Do you think it would be more equitable if the remuneration for the capital invested in machinery was made in some other way than it is at present, by the system of frame rent?" he says, "My own notion, I do not know how far I am borne out by others, is strongly against taking frame rent; I think it bad in its working department, and the source of great annoyance to the workmen and employers. My notion is, if you extinguish frame rents, you would decidedly do away with the bane that the trade labours under, that is, the system of middlemen; you will make the trade better, and the men far happier by the abolition of frame rents." Do you concur in that opinion?—Not at all; and more than that, Mr. Hannay was never in a position to give such a dogmatical opinion; he never had a sufficiently extensive acquaintance with the working of the trade.

6674. He was in the hosiery trade, and is a magistrate for the borough of Nottingham?—He is now a magistrate; I do not think he was at the time when he gave his evidence before Mr. Muggeridge.

6675. He states so here?—I was not aware of it.

6676. You do not agree with him in the opinion he has expressed in the answer to which I have referred?—I do not.

6677. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you acquainted with Mr. Felkin?—Yes.

6678. Are

6678. Are you aware of the evidence that he gave before the Commissioner?—No, I am not; he is not in the trade.

6679. But he is very extensively acquainted with the trade, is he not?—He thinks so; I do not think he knows half as much as he thinks he does.

6680. Has he not been engaged in very extensive statistical inquiries?—Yes, but statistics are not worth a great deal; you may get them for anything.

6681. In fact, you set no value on his evidence?—I do not; for I think that no evidence but that of men practically engaged in the trade is worth anything: his evidence would not weigh with me in the least; I have a high opinion of Mr. Felkin's abilities, and the things he knows he is quite competent to speak about; but he never had anything to do with the hosiery trade.

6682. Is he not considered a great authority in the hosiery trade?—From home; but we who are in the trade, do not bow to his authority; as I said before, I do not think that any man not engaged in the trade personally, practically, and daily can understand it, and see how it works.

6683. Taking your own case; you are engaged in the business personally and practically in a large way, but it does not appear to me that you undertake to answer for the practices which are carried on by others?—No; and I wish that others would do the same thing. There was a gentleman who gave evidence in this room upon the first day of this inquiry, and who very decidedly said that the practice prevailed in all the three counties of Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester, which was going, I think, far beyond his knowledge.

6684. Your evidence relates simply and entirely, does it not, to your own practice, and not to the practice of the trade generally?—I wish to speak decidedly about our own practice, but I would give an opinion upon the practice of hosiers engaged in a similar trade to ours; that is, our own neighbours.

6685. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Your practice being, if not the most extensive in the trade, one of the most extensive?—Yes; the leading hosiers are obliged to do pretty much alike; they are all respectable men, and act pretty much in the same manner.

6686. Sir *H. Halford.*] As far as you are concerned, your manufacture is conducted fairly, honourably, and justly as regards the men?—Yes.

6687. But beyond that, your evidence does not go?—Of course I would not presume to give an opinion as to how other people conduct their business; at any rate, I would not bring a charge against them. I would give an opinion favourable to others; I give the respectable men of the town, the magistrates and others holding positions equal to myself, credit for conducting their business in the same way as we do; and I believe they conduct it in as fair a manner as we do.

6688. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You think, do you not, that the imputations which have been made against the trade generally are not well founded?—Yes; we feel very much aggrieved to think that imputations should have been cast upon the trade generally, founded on isolated cases, and we are come here to deny them. A gentleman will be here to-morrow, who has been in the trade as many years as we have, and he will be prepared to deny these statements.

6689. Sir *H. Halford.*] The fact being that Government thought it necessary some years ago to send a Commissioner down for the purpose of making inquiries, and that gentleman having examined about 600 witnesses, do you not think it probable that there is to be collected from the report of the evidence given before that Commissioner, a great deal of information that may not have come to your knowledge with regard to the trade?—Very likely; but I recur to the point from which I started; that it is a voluntary engagement between free men of sound understanding, and I say that these men themselves can rectify all their complaints if they choose. I know of no instance, and I do not believe that a single instance ever came before the magistrates, in which a sober and industrious man was oppressed, or in which he has had any charge to bring against anybody; there are many men working in the villages who will go and receive almost anything that is offered to them, and that is, in a great measure, the cause of the truck system existing in our trade.

6690. Is it not the fact that, in many districts, the frame-work knitters are much oppressed?—Not more peculiarly in one district than in another.

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6691. I do not know whether you were in the room when the witnesses were examined from Hinckley?—I am acquainted with a good deal of the evidence that has been given before the Committee by persons from Hinckley.

6692. Is it not the fact that these representations have been made by persons from Hinckley, and the villages round there, of great distress, misery, and oppression among the working frame-knitters?—There were statements made in this room which have been flatly contradicted by other witnesses; I never was in Hinckley, but the trade there has been at a low ebb all my life-time, and is so still. The work made there is of a very inferior class, and the workpeople are of an inferior class also; it is well known that half the people in the town were on the poor-rates at the time when Mr. Muggeridge had his examination.

6693. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If it has been stated that the earnings of an able-bodied workman at Hinckley are from 6*s.* to 8*s.* a week, and if in your trade they vary from 10*s.* to 15*s.*, you judge that the trade in which the first men are employed, namely, the trade of Hinckley, must be in a declining state?—Yes; I cannot account for the wages being such as they are at Hinckley There will be a workman here to-morrow who has been summoned as a witness and who works to us; he will tell you that he has not a man in his shop who will go into a factory for 3*s.* 6*d.* a day.

6694. That is in Nottingham?—He lives in Derbyshire.

6695. In your district, I believe, the condition of the frame-work knitters is not at all to be compared with the depressed state of the workpeople at Hinckley as has been represented to this Committee?—Certainly not.

6696. Are they in a position to defend their own rights, as regards the labour question?—Yes, but happily now that is not necessary; the hosiers have been rather in advance of the men.

6697. But if this frame-rent system were one which they felt deeply, and which they considered to be a source of great injury to them, are they in a position to demand its removal?—They do not demand its removal; the majority of them are in favour of the present rent system.

6698. Sir *H. Halford.*] When you speak of the majority, do you speak of the whole mass of workpeople engaged in the trade?—I believe that the frame-rent is not objected to by any man who wants to work, and who is willing to work, because it is the best mode in which he can pay the charges; it is the very best thing for him.

6699. Are you aware of the number of signatures attached to the petitions that have been presented from Nottingham on the subject of frame-rent?—No.

6700. I am not sure whether I can speak correctly from memory as the precise number, but it numbers many thousands; are you aware at all how that is?—Yes; but I do not pay much attention to that, for I am acquainted with the manner in which some of those petitions were got up. I know that a petition was presented to the House from Derbyshire, containing the names of men as opposed to the objects sought by that petition as I am myself; it contains the names of men who never went near the petition, and who did not sign it at all; that is what I am told.

6701. Lord *J. Manners.*] How do you know that fact, if it be a fact; do you know it of your own knowledge?—I know it no further than this, that a man whose name is said to be to the petition denies ever having signed it, and he expressed some surprise at being told that his name was attached to it.

6702. You say a man?—Yes, one of our workmen.

6703. Have you any other instances of the same kind?—The man, who will come here to-morrow, Benjamin Elliott, is my informant; he says he has heard it stated, that many names of persons in the place he lives in, have been put to the petition, which those parties have not signed.

6704. Mr. *Gardner.*] We have not yet received any evidence from workmen, who are content with the present state of things; I wish to know from you, whether in your opinion a majority of the industrious and well-disposed working people are content with the present state of things?—My own conviction and experience is, that they think any change would be for the worse, and that they would prefer to be left to themselves.

6705. Sir *H. Halford.*] Always subject to the qualification that your knowledge does not extend much beyond your own immediate transactions?—It does not, but our concerns are so extensive, and the ramifications of our trade are

re so numerous, going right through the counties of Nottingham and Derby, nd some little part of Leicestershire, that brought as we are into communication ith all the other hosiers, we cannot materially differ in our practice. It is impossible to differ much; a man will perhaps work to us, and then leave us, and o and work to somebody else, and find very little change; and *vice versâ*, men ill come from other hosiers to us, and find no change, or next to none.

6706. Is there any specific difference between the nature of the manufacture t Hinckley, and that carried on in Nottinghamshire?—Yes; at Hinckley they anufacture a much coarser and commoner description of goods.

6707. It is the cotton hose, is it not?—I believe so; chiefly cotton.

6708. Is there anything in the nature of the manufacture carried on there, hat will explain the great difference that exists between the condition of the orkpeople generally at Hinckley, and the condition of those in your employ?—I do not know that there is more than this, that the manufacture carried on t Hinckley is of a very inferior description of goods, which come more in ompetition with the lowest class of goods made by power.

6709. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would it be correct to say, that there is as much ifference between the manufacture of Hinckley and that of Nottingham, as here is between the manufacture of heavy calicoes and light muslins?—Quite.

6710. Sir *H. Halford.*] Seeing that there is a considerable difference between he amount of frame rent demanded and stopped from the wages of the workmen at Hinckley and at Nottingham, would not that go a good way towards ccounting for the difference between the condition of the workpeople at Hinckley and at Nottingham?—I should think not; I do not think it would. am not here to offer an opinion at all about Hinckley, or as to the causes of he depressed condition of the workmen there; they have been depressed from ime immemorial; they have always been in a low state, but I do not know hat is the reason.

6711. Is it not the fact that the rent demanded for frames there has increased hile the wages have been reduced?—I cannot say; I am much surprised to ear that the frame rent has increased. I am not acquainted with the fact yself.

6712. That is not the case in Nottinghamshire?—No; there has been no ncrease within the memory of man.

6713. Have frame-rents remained always about at the same?—Always not bout the same, but the same; my father's memory goes back to 1795, and rame rents are precisely the same now as they were then.

6714. The condition of things in Nottinghamshire appears to be different rom the condition of things in Leicestershire in that respect?—It does.

6715. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You alluded to a turn-out which occurred a few years go; was that a turn-out for an advance of wages?—Yes.

6716. In the dispute which occurred between the masters and the workmen, vas any question made regarding this frame-rent?—I never heard it raised.

6717. It was not in any way involved in that dispute?—Not in the least; I merely mentioned the fact of the dispute, which was a dispute between the workmen and the middlemen about some charges, because it lasted for so many weeks that everything was brought up, and every complaint brought forward hat anybody could imagine. We had time to investigate the matter, and we lid investigate it, and found there was hardly any foundation for any complaint hat was made; there were only a few little irregularities, which were remedied, and we have heard nothing of the kind since.

6718. I understand you to say, that the present position of the workmen in your districts is such that they could resist anything in the shape of reduction of wages, or oppression as regards regular charges?—Do you mean by a turnout or by combination?

6719. That they are in such an independent position, that they could resist any attempt to increase the frame-rent, if they considered it unreasonable?—Of course they could leave their frames; I do not know that a workman could effectually resist it, if a hosier were to say, "I must have 1 *s.* 3 *d.* as rent for that which used to be only 1 *s.*;" if the workman did not choose to give it, the owner of the frame would say, "Then I shall let the frame to somebody else."

6720. Has there been an advance in wages within the last few years?—Yes, a very considerable advance; the advance was general; there was a great

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advance all through the country among labouring men, and it was given with a good will on the part of the hosiers almost unsolicited.

6721. Are the Committee to draw the conclusion, that if the workmen had considered the deduction of frame-rent from their earnings as an evil, they mould have made a complaint of it?—They would; and some of them do now; but they do not know what the abolition of it would lead to. A man says, "I should like frame-rent to come off;" in different parts of the county they are all agog about it. "Well, then what do you expect; do you think you will get the same price for stockings as you get now?" "I do not know; I suppose not." "Do you think that the hosiers will let you have their frames at your own houses, eight or ten miles from Nottingham or Derby, if you pay them no rent?" "I suppose not." "Would you like to come into a factory, and have to come to work by the bell, and leave off by the bell?" "No, I should not like that; it would break in upon my habits." The fact is, that hundreds of men will jump at the suggestion of having frame-rents taken off, without taking the trouble to work the thing out to the end, and to consider what the practical effect of it would be.

6722. Assuming that the net system of payment of wages to the workman were adopted in your trade, do you think the condition of the workmen would be improved by it?—I should say that the condition of skilful workmen, who are willing to work, and who do work, would be greatly injured.

6723. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think that the people of Hinckley would be worse off than they are now?—I cannot offer an opinion about the people of Hinckley, for I do not know how they are treated or how they are paid.

6724. *Chairman.*] Do you not think that the frame-rent system has a tendency to produce an unhealthy state of trade by occasioning a large accumulation of stock?—I do not think it has; I cannot imagine that a man would be so unwise as to accumulate stock for the mere sake of getting frame-rent.

6725. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is there not another motive for the employment of frames; namely, the injury that arises to them from the suspension of work?—That is one motive, but I trust the Committee will give the hosiers credit for a higher motive than that; they desire to keep their workmen in employ; when men have been working to us for years, we should not like to turn them adrift at once because trade happens to be bad.

6726. You agree with what Mr. Ratcliffe says, that between a large manufacturer, a gentleman conducting his business on fair and equitable principles, and his workmen, there is a tie which leads the manufacturer to continue to employ his workmen as long as he can, under any circumstances?—A very strong tie of that kind exists between them.

6727. So that it is not to be supposed that there is between these two classes an invariable state of antagonistic feeling?—By no means.

6728. Lord *J. Manners.*] You agree in the statement that stock is accumulated, but you attribute that accumulation to higher and better motives than those which have been suggested?—There are various motives; we do not like, when we have a good hand who has worked to us for many years, to turn him adrift when trade is bad, but we endeavour to keep him employed as far as is prudent; because the time may come when we shall want his services, and we do not think it right to employ him when we want him, and then to turn him off when we do not.

6729. You agree that, owing to one cause or another, there is a habit of accumulating stock beyond the ordinary demand of the trade?—That must depend upon the capital a hosier has, and the view he takes of the matter; some do, and some do not, make and keep a good deal of stock.

6730. You have said that the great body of the respectable workpeople are in favour of the system of frame-rents: that question has been much agitated of late, has it not, in Nottinghamshire?—There has been much talk about it.

6731. Have these workmen, who you represent are satisfied with the existing system, petitioned in favour of it, and against any alteration?—I do not know; there has not been one petition in favour of the continuance of frame-rent that I am aware of.

6732. How do you make your workpeople aware of your readiness to investigate all complaints that they have to make against middlemen?—It is a feeling that has arisen during a long series of years from their constant good treatment, and from the knowledge they have of us from our intercourse with them.

6733. You

6733. You say that of late years you have not had a single complaint brought before you?—No.

6734. How do you make those workmen who have within the last few years come into your employment know that you are ready to investigate any complaints that they have to make?—They inquire among one another; the feeling soon spreads; some of those men may have worked to us in past times, or perhaps they have been working in a village among our men; it soon spreads.

6735. But how, among your own men, have you made them acquainted with that fact; do you put it on paper, or communicate it verbally to each man, or how do you tell them this?—We can only tell them by having redressed certain grievances, and saying aloud, perhaps in the presence of eight or ten men who happen to be in the warehouse, "If anybody has any complaint to make, we are ready to hear it; and are prepared, if the complaint is well founded, to redress it." I do not wish to claim any peculiar merit; I believe that other respectable hosiers do the same as we do; I do not claim any particular credit in that respect.

6736. You have no doubt that all your workpeople are aware that you are perfectly prepared to inquire into any complaints of that sort?—I have not the least doubt of it; we wish them to understand that, and I think they do understand it.

6737. *Chairman.*] Are Messrs. Cox, Horner & Hogg in a large way of business in Nottingham?—I think they are.

6738. They succeeded Mr. Hannay in the business of the hosiery trade, did they not?—Yes.

6739. Do you not consider Mr. Hannay, a magistrate, and a gentleman engaged also in the hosiery trade at Nottingham, a good judge upon the question which we have been considering?—I know he has had a strong opinion on the subject of frame-rents for many years; his business was not the first quality of wrought, the same as ours; it was of a different description altogether.

6740. I will call your attention to this statement, which he made in his evidence: "The abomination that we all labour under is, the folly of making too much; every manufacturer in the town of Nottingham makes too much; we have no such thing as working to orders, except in a few cases; the general leading goods you make prospectively"?—I think that if he would confine himself to his own business it would be much better.

6741. He is then asked, in the next question, "But if the rent derivable from the frame is a source of so much importance to a great number of the small masters employed, is there not a constant tendency to glut the market with goods?" "That is the immediate effect." You do not agree with him in that opinion?—I do not.

6742. I will call your attention to one more question which follows that: he is asked, "And would not that be likely to be generally checked by the abolition of frame-rents?" His answer is, "Yes, certainly; one of the greatest reasons for the abolition of frame-rents is that you would get rid of that great overflow." You do not agree with him in that?—No; I do not offer an opinion about it at all.

6743. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Assuming that the statement of the witness whose evidence has been referred to to be correct, and that the accumulation of goods arose from the cause which he assigns, would you, as a practical man, advise that the accumulation or the non-accumulation of stock should be regulated by Act of Parliament?—Certainly not; it would be going back to the practice of the dark ages to attempt anything of the sort.

6744. Mr. *Gardner.*] You are aware, are you not, that the accumulation of stock goes on now in Lancashire, where there are no frame-rents?—Yes; it appears to me that if we choose to fill our store rooms with stockings, that is our affair, and that Parliament has nothing to do with it.

6745. Sir *H. Halford.*] Has any interference with that ever been proposed?—Certainly not; I do not think that any sane man would propose such a thing; it must be our own affair. If we choose to make stockings to fill all the barns in the county, I do not know who has any business with it.

6746. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You are connected also with a house in London, are you not?—Yes.

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6747. Part of their business is to go down to Lancashire and purchase cotton goods?—Yes.

6748. And also to go down to Leicester and purchase goods there?—Yes.

6749. You would consider it the duty of your buyer, would you not, to search out where an accumulation of stock was, so that he might make an advantageous purchase?—Yes; we go upon the principle of buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market.

6750. Sir *H. Halford.*] Your business is principally in the better quality of wrought hose, is it not?—Yes, we make every description of framework hose: gloves, drawers, shirts, and all descriptions of framework of the better qualities; we have no circular frames, and no frames going by power; every one of our frames is worked by hand.

6751. You do not consider yourself qualified to speak as to the condition of the workmen engaged in the inferior descriptions of manufacture?—It is curious that in our trade men engaged in the inferior manufactures get the most wages, though the employment is more fluctuating and more laborious.

6752. You are speaking with regard to the straight-down branch and so on, are you not?—Yes; wide frames.

6753. Mr. *Cheetham.*] They get better wages by working on improved machinery, do they not?—No; upon wide frames of all sorts they can get better wages; but the work is very laborious and rather more precarious than the narrow frame, taking the 12 months round.

6754. The work is not so continuous?—No; and it is so laborious that the men cannot work so well at it, and I do not think their health is so good upon the whole.

6755. Have you ever had your attention drawn to the inventions which are progressing in the stocking trade?—Yes.

6756. Do you know that in Nottingham there are inventions progressing which will interfere with the wrought-hose branch?—There are great improvements going on in wide frames for making the common description of straight-downs, and all work of that sort has been much improved of late; but I do not apprehend that they will greatly interfere with what we call the thorough good wrought stocking. I believe that the improvements have relation to goods below the wrought stocking.

6757. And wherever hand-labour is engaged in that inferior class of production, it has to come into direct competition with this new machinery?—Yes, and is gradually being thrown out.

6758. And in that state of things the condition of the workmen must necessarily become worse?—They will get into other employment.

6759. We are told that the passing of an Act of Parliament to abolish frame-rents, and other charges, would hasten the non-employment of these parties; do you think that that is advisable?—Certainly not; I do not think anything would either hasten or retard it; it is the natural result of a depressed state of trade, and of employment. You see a stocking is improved, and you buy it; it is a natural state of things; nothing will hasten or retard it.

6760. So that it is the interest, as well as the duty, of these parties, in their depressed condition, to seek other employments, rather than come to Parliament to legislate as to the mode in which the trade shall be carried on?—Certainly; it would be a far more wholesome and healthy state of things for men to rely on their own exertions than trust to Acts of Parliament; and any attempts to improve their condition, and raise their wages by Act of Parliament, would produce a sickly population, or a sickly-minded class of workmen.

6761. Mr. *Gardner.*] They bring these complaints before Parliament, do they not, under the idea that if frame-rents are abolished their wages will in effect be raised?—Yes; but if you put a few questions to them, and carry them on step by step, they are soon lost; they have a dreamy notion in their minds, that if there is a change something may turn up to their advantage; they hope it may.

6762. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not the fact that children are what may be called committed to the stocking trade at a very early age?—They are not committed to it; they are put to it, but they are not bound to it; it is a fact, and I am very sorry for it, that there are very few bringing up to learn the hosiery trade; the wrought-hose branch in particular; I wish there were more children steadily and regularly taught the trade.

6763. You think, then, that the trade is in that state that it might bear the employment of additional numbers?—I do not know that it requires additional numbers exactly; but I wish they were teaching young people to work the frames better than they do now, in order that there might be a succession of good hands coming on.

6764. In order that there might be a greater supply of workpeople?—Yes; as the old ones go off.

6765. *Chairman.*] Does not the poverty of the workmen employed in the stocking trade prevent their children from being employed in and apprenticed to other trades?—No; and I quite disbelieve the statements which have been made as to their poverty. If you take a man and his family, you will find that as much money comes into the cottage of a stocking-maker as comes into the cottage of any other man in the village, or rather more, because the entire family is employed; one child begins to wind, and another to seam, and eventually to work in the frame; they all bring in something, and the income of the family, I believe, is larger altogether than it is in most other cottages in the village.

6766. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you sufficiently acquainted with Leicestershire to be able to say whether the amount of money that comes into the family of a stocking-maker is greater than that which comes into the family of an agricultural labourer?—I have been told that it is, if you take the whole 12 months round; but I am not acquainted with Leicestershire. I believe I can say confidently that it is the case in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, taking the 12 months; of course they are sheltered from the weather, and from frosts and rain, and they can always work.

6767. You would say that the condition of the stocking-weavers in Nottinghamshire is better than that of the agricultural labourers?—I think the condition of their families is better.

6768. So that if an Act of Parliament be necessary for the framework-knitters of Nottinghamshire, it is, *à fortiori,* necessary for the agricultural labourers?—Yes, and just as proper.

6769. And just as impossible?—And just as impossible.

6770. Mr. *Ingham.*] You say you never practise what is called stinting?—We do not.

6771. And you do not think it is generally practised?—I do not think it is, by respectable people.

6772. How many years have you been acquainted with the trade?—My own personal experience of the trade goes back 15 or 20 years; the experience of the firm with which I am connected extends into the last century.

6773. Within your own experience, do you think the discontinuance of the practice of stinting in a failing trade is increasing?—Yes, the practice of stinting is decreasing.

6774. People are voluntarily coming to the more wholesome condition of trade?—Yes; but it is liable to abuse. You speak of giving a man half work; what is half work to one man is full work to another; the term is perfectly indefinite; and we think it better, upon the whole, either to give out no work at all, or else to give out full work.

6775. And then, when you give out no work at all, there is of course no rent obtained from any frames that are laid aside?—Certainly not.

6776. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have heard it has been stated before the Committee, that the profit upon frames is one or two hundred per cent.; does your experience confirm that?—No; it is so perfectly ridiculous, that I did not think it worth while to think about it.

6777. Will you tell the Committee what, in your judgment, is the average profit derived from frames?—It would be a mere guess, but I should say that Mr. Ratcliffe's statement was correct; five or six per cent., perhaps, but it is a matter of guess altogether with me; I do not believe it is at all more than what we are entitled to, nor do I think that anybody would keep frames for the sake of the profit to be derived from them.

6778. Mr. *Cobbett.*] You were comparing the wages of the stocking-weaver with the wages of the agricultural labourer; I understand you to say that an able bodied man at stocking-weaving could earn 15*s.* a week net?—The average; I think that is what I was asked; and I said it was from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a week; we have many who are getting 1*l.* 1*s.*

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6779. Is that one person, or a whole family?—One person.

6780. That is after making all deductions?—After making all deductions; he would have it clear to receive. We have many who earn much more; but I give the minimum, rather than the higher sum.

6781. You have seen, have you not, the evidence which has been given before this Committee, in some way or other?—Yes, parts of it.

6782. How have you seen it; you have not been here, have you?—No; I heard the whole of the first day, and the whole of Tuesday.

6783. You heard, then, a good deal of inquiry about rents and shop charges, did you not?—Yes.

6784. Your attention, then, having been called to that subject, I want to know how it is that you cannot give us any notion about what the shop charges amount to in your business?—The reason of that is, that I did not feel it was a matter that concerned me at all. We have reason to believe that these shop charges are uniform; that they are such as have been paid from time immemorial, and that the workmen are satisfied with them, and therefore I have not troubled myself about them.

6785. Mr. *Ingham.*] Do you not know them?—No, I do not.

6786. Mr. *Cobbett.*] You do not know what they are now?—I do not; I have been told, but, as I said before, I really have forgotten them; it is not a matter as to which I have any desire to avoid giving information, but the subject is one that has not come under my observation at all.

6787. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of any charge being made under the head of standing?—Yes; standing is an important charge, and a perfectly legitimate one; a stocking-maker finds a house and a room to put these frames in, and charges so much per week; that charge will include standing and various other little items, such as taking in the work and fetching it out, and so forth; all those charges come under one gross sum.

6788. When a frame is the property of a middleman, and he is receiving rent for it, is that charge for standing, in addition to the rent, a fair one, do you think?—Yes; the rent is a perfectly distinct thing from every other charge, and it is paid to the owner of the frame; but when you speak of shop-charges, you mean charges which belong to the middleman exclusively, which he makes for providing the stocking-maker with a place to put his frame in, and for the trouble he takes in going to the warehouse to fetch work out and taking it in again, and the general responsibility which is upon him.

6789. Is there not a specific charge under the head of taking-in?—It is all included in one sum; when a man says his charges are 6 *d.* or 9 *d.* a week, or whatever the sum may be, that includes everything.

6790. That is the practice in Nottinghamshire?—It is the practice with those I have talked with.

6791. It does not follow, does it, that the same practice prevails in Leicestershire?—Not at all.

6792. And if it is otherwise, and there is a separate charge for taking-in, which represents a remuneration to the middleman, a separate charge for frame-rent, the frame being his own, and a separate charge besides that for standing, should you think that fair?—Perfectly fair, because there is no compulsion. If I go to a nobleman and want to take a farm of him, he has a right to ask me what rent he pleases; if it is close to a populous town, he will charge me as much again for it as he would charge if it were 10 miles off; it is no business of mine what that farm cost him; the only question is, whether I will give him the rent he asks for it. So in the same way if I take a frame, the question is whether I will pay the rent that the owner of the frame demands for it; if I do not choose to pay the rent he asks, there is an end of the matter.

6793. Is there any security to the workman, in the case of frame-rent, that there shall be no compulsion?—Of course; how can there be any compulsion?

6794. We will take the case of a middleman employing a workman in a country village; the man cannot quit his residence; he must take work on such terms as the middleman chooses to offer him; does not that amount to something like compulsion?—Mr. Biggs says that a workman could quit his residence, and he says he would bring them into the towns and depopulate the villages.

6795. Is that to be done without considerable difficulty on the part of the workmen?—

orkmen?—Very great difficulty; I think the great convenience of our present system, is that it allows a man to work at home; he is saved great expenses by , and much exposure to accident and weather.

6796. He is, however, subject to such charges as the middleman chooses to npose?—Those charges are customary, and it is almost like law; I can only epeat what I have said before, that the charges are uniform and well under-tood.

6797. But suppose those customary charges to be tyrannical and oppressive?—Then the workmen must either submit, or take to some other employment.

6798. But is it always in their power to do so?—That must depend on ircumstances; a farm labourer is obliged to accept the best wages he can get rom the farmer; if he does not like one farmer he tries another; he must ubmit in the best way he can, if he cannot get all he wants; it is entirely oluntary.

6799. Do you think there is the same liberty with respect to a stocking-naker in such a case as we speak of, in a country village where the work is dis-ributed by middlemen, as there is in the case of an agricultural labourer who nay go where he pleases?—More so; for stocking-makers are generally a very ndependent class of men; they go from one master, or from one village to nother, wherever they can find employment most to their taste. I should say hat, of the two, they are far more independent than farm labourers; a man nce a farm labourer, is always a farm labourer; he knows nothing else to the lay of his death; but a stocking-maker, having learnt a certain amount of andicraft, can turn to other things much easier.

6800. Is not the employment of labour in stocking-making in much fewer ands than the employment in agriculture?—I should think not; I should hink there is a very equal distribution; perhaps taking the counties together t is in favour of the hosiery trade.

6801. Mr. *Gardner.*] What are the average wages of an agricultural labourer n Nottinghamshire?—In harvest time I think they get 15*s.*, and in winter, 10*s* or 12*s.*

6802. Do you think the average wages of frame-work knitters are higher han those of an agricultural labourer in Nottinghamshire?—I think an able-odied clever frame-work knitter (I am speaking now of a man who under-tands his business), taking the whole 12 months in the year, will get more than ny agricultural labourer can get, because he is not subject to fluctuations; he is independent of the weather, and taking the whole year through, I think he will earn more money.

6803. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are speaking now of the branch of trade with which you are concerned?—Yes.

6804. Mr. *Cobbett.*] If he earns 15*s.*, is that net; or, if not, what deductions do you make?—We, as hosiers, can only make a deduction of 1*s.* a week for frame rent; all the rest of the deduction is made by the middleman, if there is one.

6805. Supposing it were 15*s.* net, what would the gross wages be?—The gross wages would be perhaps 18*s.*; it would depend on what were the deductions made by the middleman.

6806. The deductions consist of shop charges and the rent of the frame?—Yes.

6807. There would be about 3*s.* a week deducted for rent and shop charges?—I wish to guard against being supposed to commit myself to any opinion with reference to shop charges, because I do not know what they are.

6808. Have you reason to believe that, where the net wages are 15*s.* a week, the gross wages would be 18*s.*?—If I were to say that, I might just as well say the rent and charges amount to 3*s.* a week. If I were to answer your question in the affirmative, I should be just as much committing myself as if I were to say the rent and charges amount to 3*s.* a week.

6809. Lord *J. Manners.*] How do you arrive at the 15*s.* a week net?—I have been told so; it is an impression that I have that they can clear that.

6810. You do not know it of your own knowledge?—I have been told it.

6811. By whom have you been told?—By our own workmen.

6812. Is that recently?—Not very. I have not asked a question of any workman with reference to this inquiry.

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6813. You give that as an approximation, but you do not know much about it?—I do not.

6814. When you say you believe they make 15*s.* a week net, you do not mean to say you know it as a fact?—It is not a matter that concerns me the least in the world. All we have to do is to give out the work, and give the workmen so much a dozen for making it. A man may take his material, and do as much as he likes; if he has cleared 15*s.*, or whatever he has cleared, that is not my business; it is his own affair entirely.

6815. You do not know what the net wages are?—I do not. There has been so much speculation on the subject, that I have most carefully abstained from inquiring into it.

6816. Mr. *Cobbett.*] What has taken place has not whetted your appetite for inquiry?—Certainly not, for it all comes to nothing; if I gave myself all manner of trouble, what would it come to?

6817. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you give us any information as to the net earnings of that class of workmen who work direct to you?—No, I have not troubled myself about it in the least; I cannot make any difference in it, and nobody else can. A man has his frame, and has his work given out to him; one man, if he is very skilful and clever, will make 12 pairs while another is making nine; we have plenty of those variations.

6818. What would be the earnings of the man who made 12 pairs?—I have stated that he would probably earn 15*s.*; I fancy that is something like an approximation to a correct statement.

6819. Mr. *Ingham.*] You know the prices you pay, per dozen, do you not?—Yes.

6820. Making 12 dozen, what would be the gross price paid by you to the workman?—Where we make thousands of articles, it would be impossible to say the price we pay per dozen.

6821. You do not pay by the thousand, but by the dozen; how much do you pay a dozen?—I do not know how to begin to answer that question.

6822. You pay the men individually who work direct to you, do you?—Yes.

6823. Do you pay them once a week?—They generally come in once a fortnight.

6824. Then do you not know how much money you pay them in a fortnight?—Yes; but supposing a man has 20 frames, and he brings in one fortnight 40 dozen, and another 45, and the week previous 35 dozens, we do not trouble ourselves to examine what each man has earned; that is a matter that does not concern us.

6825. Do you pay those workmen individually who work direct to you?—We pay a man who works one frame, and who fetches the work out himself, and brings it in himself.

6826. What do you pay in a fortnight to such a man?—He may earn from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a week.

6827. That is your gross payment to him?—That is our payment to him.

6828. What he earns net is what he gets after the deductions are made, the amount of which you do not know?—A workman who has his frame at home will have no deductions except a shilling a week for rent, the seaming and winding being chiefly done by his own family.

6829. But any other person working under a middleman will not earn more than that individual workman earns, and will have all those allowances to pay out of the amount earned?—He will not earn more, and I do not think he will earn less. I am quite of opinion that it is not to the advantage of the poor men to come any distance into the town; if they were content to do so, they would do better working to respectable middlemen than bringing the work in themselves.

6830. You think that the interruption to a man's labour by coming in to your factory would, in effect, reduce his earnings at the end of a fortnight as much as if he paid charges to a middleman to do it for him?—More so. I have been asked a question as to the Ticket Act, and I wish to state that a compliance with that Act would involve the necessity of every man being able to read and write, or, at all events, to read writing, which we know they cannot do.

lo. What is the use of giving a man a paper containing a vast number of particulars if he cannot read it when it is given to him?

6831. Sir *H. Halford.*] Would not that be a motive to him to educate his children?—Yes, it might be.

6832. Mr. *Biggs.*] You think, in point of fact, that the existence of middlemen is a source of economy to the workmen?—Yes, I think it must be a considerable advantage to them in many instances. Many workmen are not competent o come into a warehouse; many of them are pretty well informed, but others are very ignorant men, and more than that, they are not qualified to take care of their frames. Mr. Ratcliffe completely mistook the question of middlemen. One of the great duties of a middleman is to keep the frames in order; that is why we like middlemen, and employ them in a great measure.

6833. Lord *J. Manners.*] Did you bring any books of yours up with you?—No, I did not.

6834. Sir *H. Halford.*] If you like the system of employing middlemen, is there any good reason why they should not be paid by the manufacturers instead of by the workmen?—I think the workman is the proper person to pay them.

6835. Mr. *Biggs.*] Because he receives the value of their services?—Yes.

6836. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is not that a reason why the manufacturers should pay them, and not the workman?—It has been the custom from time immemorial for the workman to pay them.

6837. Do you not really think that the trade would be on a more wholesome and natural footing if the middleman were the agent of the manufacturer, recognised and paid by him, instead of being left to find his remuneration as he can from the workmen?—I do not think it would; I think that the present system has worked well, and if it was only superintended as well as we superintend it, I think it would work better than it does in some places. My opinion is, that any interference with it would in the end produce great inconvenience to the actual workers in the frames. My firm conviction is, that great evil would arise from breaking in upon a system which has existed now for two centuries; there is a great check upon the middleman which is not supposed to exist, but which does exist, and which produces a uniformity in prices.

6838. Your chief recommendation of the system is the respectability it derives from its antiquity?—No; I am not such an admirer of antiquity as to say that, but I have a strong general opinion that anything that is old is more likely to be respectable than that which is new.

6839. Mr. *Biggs.*] In the event of the manufacturer paying the middleman on the principle the Honourable Baronet has suggested to you, is it not the case that he could not pay the middleman in addition to the present wages, but that he must reduce the wages to the same extent?—Yes; and if he paid the middleman himself he must leave that middleman to do the best he could with the working men; and he would do so. It would sever the tie now existing between the manufacturers and the workmen.

6840. Mr. *Gardner.*] The wages paid in Nottingham are more than double those which are paid in Hinckley, are they not?—I fancy they are; I am not acquainted with the rate of wages in Leicestershire; the statements which have been made as to the lowness of wages there, are certainly very startling.

6841. Your opinion is, that the wages in Nottinghamshire are higher than they are there?—Yes; and there is a superior class of work.

6842. If the rent system were responsible for the lowness of wages at Hinckley, the same cause would produce the same result, would it not, in Nottingham?—Yes.

6843. But the rent system is not, in your opinion, responsible for it?—I think not.

6844. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The difference of rent having been stated to be only 3*d.* per week between Hinckley and Nottingham, do you think that that difference of 3*d.* a week would account for the difference in the condition of the workmen?—I think not.

6845. Mr. *Cobbett.*] You have told the honourable Baronet that you do not practise stinting at all?—We do not.

6846. I understood you to say that you exercise great vigilance to prevent it?—I do not remember that question being put to me; I do not know that we are ever called on to exercise such vigilance.

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6847. Did you ever have any complaints made to you of it?—Never.

6848. What do you mean, then, by saying that the charges which were made and inquired into by you were "trumped up"?—There were certain vague charges made against certain men for having acted contrary to our orders, and when the parties were brought face to face, the facts did not bear out the charges.

6849. When were those charges made?—I forget now; seven or eight years ago; but there were very few.

6850. What were the complants, do you recollect; what sort of misconduct was imputed to the middlemen?—It was quite a limited affair; I think it was said that a man had not paid the same price that we had paid him, or that he made some kind of deduction.

6851. Was it only one charge?—Only one.

6852. When you alluded to "trumped-up charges," you only referred, in fact, to one charge, made on one occasion, and which turned out to be unfounded?—Yes.

6853. You have spoken about people having said that their names were put to petitions which they had not signed; do you think that the whole body of frame-work knitters in Nottinghamshire, if they were consulted upon the subject, would sign a petition against any alteration by law of the present practice of charging frame-rents?—That is a very wide question, and I am not able to answer it. I have never met with a man yet, nor do I know a man who has been willing to work, and able to work, and who does a good deal of work, who wishes the frame-rent system altered, because he is convinced that if frame-rents are abolished, there must be an alteration of wages; he knows it will be followed by a reduction of wages, and that consequently able and industrious workmen would be greater sufferers than men who are idle or incapable of doing work.

6854. You think that the only persons who would petition for it are persons who do not want to work?—People who like to go about the country and take their pleasure and make holydays when they wish; it would be a gratification to such persons to feel that their expenses are not running on when they choose not to work, and that they can go where they like, and work when they like; but those are not the men who bring up their families well.

6855. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do these complaints and petitions proceed, in your opinion, from independent workmen, or do they proceed from a society organised "to protect industry," as it is termed?—They are chiefly got up by agitators; whenever there is a strike, we find that the same men turn up and conduct the thing; they generally run through the three counties.

6856. Are these men working men?—They call themselves stocking-makers; but they like anything better than working.

6857. Sir *H. Hatford.*] Will not the success of their agitation depend very much upon the nature and extent of the grievance upon which it is founded?—I suppose it will; but we do not always judge of the extent of a grievance by the noise of the agitation.

6858. Mr. *Gardner.*] Among the working men who have been called from Leicestershire, we have had at least three who are connected officially with a society for the purpose of obtaining legislative interference on this subject; should you attach much importance to the opinions of such men with reference to the hosiery trade?—Not the slightest in the world; it must be speculation on their part in a great measure.

6859. Are you prepared to bring before the Committee any workmen who will state that they are satisfied with the present state of things and opposed to legislation?—One of our workmen is summoned as a witness, and will, I believe, appear before the Committee to-morrow; a person of the name of Elliott.

6860. The evidence of nine working men connected with the trade in Leicestershire having already been heard in favour of legislative interference, is it not, in your opinion, desirable that evidence should be given by persons of the same class who entertain a contrary opinion?—Yes, and I should hope that this man will be examined.

6861. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you state it as your impression that there are a considerable number of workmen who object to any change being made in the existing

existing system?—I think there are; we never hear the subject mentioned at all to ourselves.

6862. And you think the Committee ought to have persons of every class called before them, who are interested in any proposed or prospective legislation on this subject?—Certainly; if you were to go to a man, and say, "Would you like frame rents abolished?" he would say at once, as a matter of course, "Yes;" but if you explain to him what the consequences would be, and if you follow it out, he would then see what it would lead to.

6863. Mr. *Gardner.*] If you were to ask any man if he would like to have his wages raised by the amount of rent he pays, of course he would say "Yes"?—Yes.

6864. *Chairman.*] You do not think that the evil of frame rent is so great in Nottinghamshire, as it has been described to be in Leicestershire?—It does not appear that the charge made for frame rent is so great in Nottinghamshire as it is in Leicestershire.

6865. Or so oppressive?—I do not know; the question of oppression of course must vary according to the amount of rent taken. I do not know that that they have a more oppressive manner of taking it than we have in Nottinghamshire, though the amount seems to be larger.

6866. The practice in Nottinghamshire, as regards the workmen, appears to be more leniently carried out than it is stated to be carried out in the county of Leicester?—I do not know that it is among the respectable hosiers; if I were to believe the statements which have been made by some of the men from Leicestershire, the practice carried out there in many cases would seem to be very bad; but I do not believe them all.

6867. Sir *H. Halford.*] Suppose there is a variation between the practice in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, would not the fact of there being that variation prove that the rent of frames is not subject to the ordinary influences which regulate price, and that there is something in the mode of conducting the manufacture which withdraws it from those ordinary influences?—No, because we see the same variations in every trade, and every occupation; you will find farmers in one village giving a shilling a week more wages than those which are given in the next village.

6868. Is it not the fact, that there are general influences regulating price?—Are you referring to the hosiery trade?

6869. No; is it not generally the fact that the price of goods is regulated by, and is subject to the general influences of supply and demand?—Yes; that is the politico-economical idea.

6870. When there is a great variation between two neighbouring counties in the price of a particular article, does not that tend to show that there is something disturbing that influence?—There may be some reasons in operation that I am not acquainted with; it may be that stocking makers in Leicestershire may be as well off as they are in Nottinghamshire, although they pay more rent.

6871. But *primâ facie* you would infer, would you not, that there is something disturbing the natural influences regulating prices?—It seems so. I heard a statement once made by Sir Joshua Walmsley, that he was so distressed at the condition of the stocking makers that he took some of them into Lancashire, and gave them a guinea a week wages; but he could not induce them to stop there; although he was bringing them from such a state of misery out of Leicestershire, they would not stop.

6872. There is something in a state of misery, beggary, and oppression, that they like?—I do not know; he stated that to a friend of mine in the lobby of the House of Commons. I think that goes to show that the earnings of the family of a frame-work knitter in Leicestershire cannot be so little as they have been represented to be; that although the man himself may get more in Lancashire, his family will receive quite as much if he continues to work as a knitter in Leicestershire.

6873. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it not the fact, that when a manufacturer in any trade is compelled to sell his goods, when there is but little demand for them, he must submit to receive a price less even than they cost him?—Yes.

6874. In one sense that may be called an oppression; the man who has to sell might say, in one sense, "I am oppressed by being obliged to sell my goods for less than they cost me;" might he not?—Yes.

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6875. Is not a labourer working in a district in which labour is redundant, exactly in the same position as a manufacturer selling in a redundant market the article he produces?—Except that the labourer is better off; I do not think that the manufacturer reduces his workmen's wages if trade is bad; he must not consider what they cost him, but what he can get.

6876. Lord *J. Manners.*] You say that a master does not reduce the wages of his workmen if trade is bad; if so, when does he reduce them?—In nine times out of ten the reduction in wages emanates from the workmen themselves; there are many who work independent frames, who will take out work at a price lower than the standard price in order to get employment, and this increases until the respectable manufacturers find themselves under made; then comes a general and universal reduction of wages; I may say not only that it does not arise from the manufacturers in nine cases out of ten, but that in 19 cases out of 20 the reduction of wages commences in the way I have described.

6877. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In your particular manufacture the wages, I believe, form the larger part of the cost?—Yes; nine-tenths of it.

6878. Your production being large, and you having at all times more or less stock on hand, it is your interest, is it not, that wages should be maintained at as steady a rate as possible?—It is; that is proved by experience; the large manufacturers are the best friends that the workmen have by maintaining a regularity of price.

6879. And a reduction of wages you say is generally effected through some smaller manufacturer having first necessarily submitted to a lower price on the sale of his goods, and falling back on his workmen to make up his loss?—Yes.

6880. And after that has continued for some time, you find it necessary to follow his example, and to reduce the wages of your workmen?—Yes; we had an advance of wages in 1853; since that time there has been a great effort on the part of some small manufacturers to get that advance off, and it is with the greatest difficulty that we have been able to keep it on.

6881. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have slightly modified an answer that you gave to me, that the diminution of wages resulted from the workpeople themselves; I understand you now to say that it is attributable to the smaller master manufacturers?—I will qualify my answer to this extent; that both are implicated in it. Needy workmen who own their own frames, or have not hosiers' frames, will tempt the smaller manufacturers to give them work by offering to work at a lower price; and when trade is bad will go, and say, "If you will give me work for my frames, I will pay you rent for them." That has been offered to us over and over again. Needy workmen will offer to pay us rent for frames belonging to them, if we will give them employment.

6882. In that instance, we must assume that the payment of rent is the cause of their working at reduced wages?—Not at all.

6883. I understand you to say, that a workman goes to a small master manufacturer, and says, "If you will only give me work, I will pay you full rent?"—Yes.

6884. The master manufacturer says, "I cannot give you that work, unless I exact the full rent?"—No; I did not say so. I say that a man comes to a manufacturer, and tempts him by saying, "If you will employ this frame, I will give you rent." It is only, in other words, saying, "I will make the hose for a shilling a dozen less."

6885. Mr. *Cheetham.*] It is, in point of fact, another mode of reducing wages?—It is only another mode of reducing wages.

6886. Mr. *Biggs.*] One of the advantages to the workman of the rent system is continuous employment, is it not?—That is one advantage.

6887. Assuming frame rent to be abolished by Act of Parliament, there would not be the same interest to employ a workman all the year round?—No; and it would produce an uncomfortable feeling through the trade in general; it would break the link that binds us together. Supposing you had got this Act of Parliament, and we were required to go by Act of Parliament, we should have no remuneration for that part of our capital that is invested in frames.

6888. Lord *J. Manners.*] Are we to understand that, with respect to one-fourth of the number of persons in your employment, there are no beneficial ties between them and you?—There are very strong ones.

6889. But

6889. But there are no middlemen between you and them?—No.

6890. How can you reconcile the two statements?—We all know that ties, however beneficial and strong, may be broken.

6891. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And you think that any legislative interference between you and your workmen would tend to sever and weaken those ties which at present exist between you?—It would, decidedly, and it would reduce the hosiery manufacturers to a level; it would not improve the bad master, and it would injure the good.

6892. Mr. *Gardner.*] And what is more important still, you think it would have a tendency to reduce the earnings or net wages of the workmen?—Yes, I am sure it would.

6893. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have a list, I believe, of the wages paid to the workmen per dozen?—Yes.

6894. Is it a printed list?—No.

6895. But it is extended to various descriptions of goods, is it not?—Yes, it is to all goods that are made; and any deviation from that list is paid for according to arrangement.

6896. Supposing an attempt were made to carry out a net system, that would be, of course, after deducting from the prices in the present list the amount of the rent?—Yes.

6897. This rent, you say, has been invariable, so far as your recollection goes?—Yes.

6898. Do you think that a net list, if it were adopted, would be as invariable?—I should say not; it would vary, I think, with every circumstance.

6899. And if the effect of that variation were to reduce wages below what they are now, to that extent it would injure the position of the workmen?—Undoubtedly.

6900. Sir *H. Halford.*] Has the selling value of frames altered during your experience?—No, I think not.

6901. Not in Nottinghamshire?—No, not much; I cannot speak much as to that.

6902. You are not aware how the fact is in Leicestershire?—Not at all.

6903. If a frame that used to sell for 10 *l.* will not now sell for more than 3 *l.*, is it fair, in your opinion, that the same rent should be demanded for it as was before taken?—I think it is quite fair.

6904. How can that be?—Because the stocking-maker has nothing to do with the value of the frame, and has no right to inquire into it.

6905. Though he pays rent for it?—No; he has no more right to do so than a tenant farmer has a right to inquire the value of the land he is occupying.

6906. But I imagine that he has that right?—If he were to assert it, I think he would be soon told he has not.

6907. Mr. *Cheetham.*] He has no right to demand that the rent of the farm shall be in proportion to the value of the fee-simple?—No.

6908. Mr. *Gardner.*] He has only a right to inquire whether it will answer his purpose to pay a certain rent for it or not?—Yes; if I buy a lot of frames at a cheap rate, it is to my advantage to do so, and I am entitled to the benefit of it.

6909. Mr. *Cobbett.*] What should you think of a man who built cottages for 100 *l.* each, and charged 15 *l.* a year each for the rent of them?—I should think that he had a perfect right to do it if anybody would take them at that rent.

6910. That you think would be fair?—Yes, I think it would be perfectly fair.

6911. Lord *J. Manners.*] If you make a very bad hat, and can get a man to give you 1 *l.* or 2 *l.* for it, you think that that is fair?—If I have an article to sell, and a man will give me my price for it, that is nobody else's business; if I were to sell sand for sugar, that would be a fraud.

6912. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you think that the landowners of Nottingham deal with their tenants on any other principle than that to which you have adverted?—No.

6913. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it the fact that the same rent is paid for frames varying in value to the extent you have described?—I do not think that any landlord talks to his tenant a moment about what the land cost him; if a tenant likes to take the farm at the rent asked for it, he can do so; if he does not, he then goes about his business.

Mr. *A. Morley.*

21 June 1855.

6914. Practically speaking, is not the rent of land governed by fixed principles depending on the value of the land?—Certainly not; it is dependent, certainly, on two other things: its contiguity to large manufacturing towns, and the number of applications that are made for it.

6915. But that increases the value of it, does it not?—Not exactly; the actual intrinsic value of land close to Nottingham may not be so great as it is 10 miles off, although it may let for double the rent.

6916. Is there anything analogous to that in the transactions with regard to frames?—I say it is injustice to the hosiers to put them upon their trial as to what their frames have cost them; in that respect they are in the same position as people are who own land. A man who takes a house never inquires what the house cost the landlord; and if he did inquire, he would not be told.

6917. Mr. *Gardner.*] In many cases the land has not cost landowners anything, but has been taken by force; but still they get the present market value?—Yes.

6918. And you think that a legitimate proceeding?—Yes; you will see some miserable little cabin by the road side, which the landowner would give a great deal of money to pull down; there are some down in the Commercial Road, not worth 30 *s.*, which are paying five times that rent.

6919. Sir *H. Halford.*] Generally speaking, does not the original value and the value to let correspond; is not that a general principle?—A thing may be of value to me, that is of none to you; I may want land; it may be worth my while to give 5 *l.* an acre for it; another man may not want it, and will give nothing for it; it is the same with a stocking-frame; the question is, does a man want that frame? Can he get a living by it? If he can, that is the rent for it. What does it signify to him what the frame cost the owner of it? He is not called on to work the frame at all. Nobody asks him to do it, or compels him to do it. He comes and asks to take that frame, and if he takes it he must pay so much a week for it.

6920. Practically he does give it, and cannot get a frame without giving it?—No; but there is no injustice in that, because there is no compulsion; if a man takes a horse to a fair to sell, he does not consider what the horse cost him, but what he can get for that horse in the fair.

6921. Did you hear Mr. Corah's evidence?—No.

6922. You are not aware of the invention he spoke of, by means of which fashioned hose are being made by steam-power?—Yes, I am.

6923. Are you practically acquainted with it?—I am aware of it.

9924. Do you think that that will have the effect of superseding the hand-made hose?—Not the best fashioned wrought hose; it will supersede all the goods that are made below that quality, not the goods that are made above it.

6925. Is it not possible that it may be adopted to make fine goods?—Yes; but still they will always want quality and substance, and something or other which can only be understood by those engaged in the trade; I believe it will be a very long time before they supersede, if ever they do supersede, the best goods.

6926. Mr. *Biggs.*] I think the Committee understand it to be your opinion that any legislation on this subject would only aggravate the evils which it was intended to cure?—Yes, quite so.

6927. And that it would be perfectly valueless and nugatory?—Quite so. I think it would make the bad masters no better, and the good masters a little worse.

Veneris, 22° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Ingham.	Sir H. Halford.
Mr. Wickham.	Lord John Manners.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Mundy.	

ROBERT INGHAM, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *James Roger Allen*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *J. R. Allen.*
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6928. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—At Nottingham.

6929. Are you a manufacturer there?—Yes.

6930. I think you have been so for some years?—I have been a manufacturer myself, on my own account, for about 40 years, and I have been in the trade 47 years.

6931. Are you conversant with the way in which the hosiery business is carried on there?—As far as it is necessary for a manufacturer to know.

6932. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you any frames of your own?—We have.

6933. How many?—I could not say exactly; perhaps from 160 to 200.

6934. Do you receive the rents of those frames yourself?—We do.

6935. Do they work direct to the warehouse?—All the work is taken in by myself entirely in every single case.

6936. What is the rent you charge for frames?—Nine-pence for the 24 and 26-gauge, and 1 *s.* for the 30-gauge, and upwards.

6937. Have those been the charges ever since you have been in the trade?—I should say ever since a frame was made; that is to say, as far as my father's and my own knowledge goes; that knowledge extends over 100 years; my father is not alive now; but I was in business with him for many years.

6938. The charge for the frames from 16 to 24-gauge is 9 *d.*?—We do not go so low as 16.

6939. Although you call them narrow frames, they do not work the same class of goods as those which are made at Hinckley?—No; the Hinckley goods are of a much lower class.

6940. From their inferiority, and from their being lower in number, would not their frames be more liable to injury than yours?—I have no knowledge of that; but I should suppose so, for they must go at greater speed, and they do not use so good a quality of material.

6941. These charges for rents have been invariable, have they?—Without the slightest change, and the charge for frame-rent is so thoroughly understood that I cannot recollect ever being asked a question about it in my life by any workman; when a workman comes to the warehouse and asks to have a frame, he never asks what the rent of it is.

6942. Besides the deduction for rent is there any other deduction made from the earnings of the workmen?—None whatever; I do not recollect a single instance in which a deduction has been made for bad work, though we ought to make it very often.

6943. You remonstrate with the workmen instead?—Yes; we remonstrate with them, and if that remonstrance is not attended to we discharge them.

6944. The wages of the workmen are fixed by a printed list, I believe?—We have been working now by the printed list of 1819, though not strictly in accordance with it; that is the starting point; that has been the case ever since 1819.

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6945. And that list is open to the knowledge of all the workmen?—Every man may get it if he pleases; it was sold at the printer's shop in Nottingham for many years for a halfpenny.

6946. Since that list was published have you had any disputes with your workmen with regard to wages?—Several; I remember three very serious turn-outs.

6947. Going back to those occasions, are you aware whether the workmen did at that time raise this question of frame-rent as a grievance on their part?—I never heard it raised at all; it was never one of their grievances.

6948. *Chairman.*] What were the dates of these turn-outs?—In 1819 there was a serious turn-out; I could not remember the dates; I can remember facts better than dates; there was one turn-out within the last four or five years, and that lasted above 13 weeks.

6949. Mr. *Wickham.*] Was that about 1848?—About that time, and there was one somewhere about 1824 or 1825.

6950. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In times of bad trade are you in the habit of giving out only partial employment for the frames?—Never.

6951. When times of that kind occur do you lay down your frames, or some of them?—We stop them; we do not lay them down; and at the same time all expenses are stopped.

6952. So that in your case the grievance which has been stated to the Committee to exist, of exacting full rent for partial employment, does not occur?—It never occurs in our warehouse at any time; in fact, the workmen have always stuff in hand, they are never without it.

6953. How do you act in cases of sickness on the part of the workmen?—I should claim to take the rent if I chose; they take the frame of me subject to paying me the rent until they give it up; a fortnight's notice will terminate the agreement; but in point of fact, no man ever makes a claim which we believe to be valid without our making him an allowance.

6954. As regards the original implied contract, it is that he takes upon himself the liability to pay rent?—Yes, he takes upon himself the liability till he gives the frame up.

6955. But if there is a case of sickness distinctly proved, you deduct a portion only of the rent, do you not?—Yes; we deduct from the rent all he can fairly claim as an allowance; we generally take into consideration the work he brings in when he comes to reckon with us. They never make a claim of it as a matter of right.

6956. It has been the subject of complaint before this Committee that the same rent is exacted when children are at work in these frames as is exacted from able-bodied workmen; what have you to say with respect to that practice?—I should say that, as a matter of principle, we ought to charge them more, for they do the frames much more mischief; and I consider it is decidedly a favour to let these young hands work them.

6957. You have hitherto spoken of your own practice; can you give the Committee any information with reference to the general practice in Nottingham and the neighbourhood with regard to this point?—I have not the least idea that the practice is different to my own, or that I act on a better principle, or am more kind to them than the rest of the trade. I have scarcely ever heard complaints from them of other manufacturers; I hear some men abused very much, but that is for their manner as much as anything else; there will be always some who will have a bad name; the most remarkable fact is that those who bear the worst names among the men are the least with us on this occasion; there is only one manufacturer who has not joined us and subscribed to the expenses of our opposition to the Bills that have been proposed to Parliament, and he, I think, bears the worst character with the workmen of any man in the trade; and I was told by a deputation of the stockingers that they had spent 700 *l.* in trying to stop him lately.

6958. What objection appears to you to lie against a system of legislation which would prohibit you from deducting frame-rents from the wages of your workmen?—That it is impossible we can provide machinery for the men to work without being remunerated for the original cost, and for the repairs to it which are necessary from time to time; it appears to me that the abolition of

of frame-rents by legislative enactment, would absolutely necessitate a new arrangement throughout, and I am sure that the workmen would suffer under that new arrangement.

6959. Is it your opinion that the amount of the rent which is now deducted from the wages of workmen would be taken into consideration in forming that new arrangement?—It must be so.

6960. Do you think that the actual position of the workmen, as regards their weekly earnings, would be in any way improved by such legislation?—I should say that they would be decidedly worse off than they are now; a respectable, honest, steady and industrious man, who would make a greater amount of work, would have to pay a larger amount than he pays now, in order to cover the loss arising from the small amount of work done by the idle and profligate.

6961. Of course, in such new arrangements as we have heard talked about, such as that which is called a net system, the amount of wages would be exposed to variations arising from a fluctuating state of trade?—There would be hardly two parties paying in the same manner; it would unsettle everything.

6962. It has been stated that even assuming that point of view to be correct, and that the position of the workmen, as regards their wages, would not be improved, yet a source of great irritation between the workmen and their employers would be removed; are you aware of that statement?—So far from any irritation existing, I never heard the slightest complaint made by any workmen on the subject.

6963. Can you give the Committee any information as to the charges made by middlemen?—I can only say what I have heard some of them say.

6964. You have no practical information upon that point?—No, it does not come before us at all; I know that the arrangement must depend upon circumstances; in some cases these men live in the house with them; they are men who have no home; men who are here to-day and gone to-morrow; they have certain things found them; some will find them vegetables, some tea, and so on, and some will find them nothing; it will depend entirely upon the bargain they make with the men; there are other charges, such as the sending-in charges and the frame-rent, which are fixed and steady, and which do not vary.

6965. It has been suggested to the Committee that the condition of the workmen would be improved by the abolition of the system at present existing, of employing middlemen?—I think that to talk about the abolition of middlemen is a perfect absurdity; in fact, it would be a total impossibility for manufacturers to carry on their business without them; small as my business is, I am obliged to employ middlemen; I have women, children, old men, and some men full grown who work for me, but who are perfectly incapable of taking care of a frame.

6966. It has been said that the evil of employing middlemen is that they are paid out of the earnings of the workmen; whereas, if there were no such individuals, the manufacturers would employ agents or takers-in in their own warehouses, whose wages they themselves would pay; what is your opinion upon that subject?—It would be impossible; these parties could not get work in that case; they must either be shut out of the trade entirely, or you must employ middlemen to look after them.

6967. *Chairman.*] Might not a manufacturer employ and pay an agent whose business it should be to deliver the material to the workmen, and get it from them when it was worked up?—But he must be with them constantly; he must live with them.

6968. Lord *J. Manners.*] How would you meet the case of people who work in their own houses?—I can give you an instance with reference to a person in my own employ: some time ago, a man who had some frames of mine, and had a family of 10 children, killed himself with drinking; he left a widow, who was not a stocking-maker, for she had never worked in a frame, with 10 children; three of his children had worked to me; they were what I should call great girls, between 15, 16, and 17 years of age; out of kindness to that family I continued the frames with them; but I was obliged to ask some of my workmen there, as a matter of favour, to look after the frames, and keep them in order, or the woman would have been set fast in a fortnight.

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6969. Mr. *Mundy.*] Why did you not employ a middleman upon that occasion?—The woman, herself, was the middleman, so to speak; she was responsible to me for the children who worked under her.

6970. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Will you define more clearly than we have as yet had it defined by any witness, what are the different grades of middlemen?—The different grades of middlemen are from the men or women who take out a single frame for themselves; when a man does that he is not a middleman, but if he takes two or more he becomes a middleman; there are men who take from two, up to 200 or 300 frames; there is every grade; I have men in my own employ who rent from two frames up to 12 or 14.

6971. And in all those different grades the party who deals direct with you is the only party you know?—The only party responsible to me.

6972. You do not know how he may transact his business, or what contracts he may make with regard to those other frames which are worked under him?—I do know, that in point of fact our hands know, as well as we do ourselves, what we are giving at the warehouse.

6973. You do not profess to have any direct control over the middleman?—Only that he shall not wrong the workmen.

6974. Have your workmen the opportunity of appealing to you in case any dispute shall arise between them and the middleman?—Yes.

6975. It has been stated to the Committee that very large profits, in the shape of rent, are derived in the hosiery trade from the investment of money in frames; 50 and 100 per cent. has been spoken of; have you given that subject your attention at all?—Yes; in consequence of what has been stated; and I must say that most of the manufacturers are astonished, when they come to look into it, at the small amount of profit they get from frames; they have had a vague idea upon the subject, but it forms no part of our consideration as to profit in the business, and therefore we have not looked into it, but we certainly thought that we were getting more than we really are. I am quite convinced no man, on an average of years, gets five per cent. profit by his machinery. I could not give you the particulars, but I have carefully investigated the matter with a view to satisfy myself, and I am quite convinced that we do not clear five per cent. on our frames.

6976. Lord *J. Manners.*] Does that calculation extend over the three counties?—I speak of my own only.

6977. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you mean five per cent. above the interest of capital and the expenses of repairs, or five per cent. as representing the interest of capital?—No, I consider that no prudent manufacturer would take any profit at all until he has taken five per cent. on the capital invested.

6978. Then it is five per cent. above the interest of capital, and the expenses of repairs?—I would say that is the utmost extent of profit that can be cleared after paying five per cent. for the capital.

6979. But that five per cent. is clear profit?—It may be profit if they can get it.

6980. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Over and above the five per cent. interest?—Yes, and I defy any man to show that he gets more.

6981. Can you give the Committee any information as to the average earnings of the workpeople in your employ?—I can; I have been at some pains trying to work it out; this (*producing a paper*) will show in a short form the average earnings per week of 34 hands for from 12 to 15 weeks consecutively; it shows the money absolutely paid to them.

6982. Is that a statement taken from your own books?—Yes, and it is a fair average of the class of men, women, and children; it is rather under than over.

6983. Amounting in number to 34, whose net earnings are 10*s.* 11½*d.* per week; is that so?—Yes; they received that from me for from 12 to 16 weeks running.

6984. What is the date of those weeks; is it in the present year?—No, I took them out for the purpose of the last inquiry; we were expecting to come up last year.

6985. Lord *J. Manners.*] All these persons are working direct to the warehouse?—The head of the shop comes in; the children do not come in, the women do not come in, and many of the journeymen do not come in; but there

here is a representative from every shop who comes in with the work and takes out the materials.

6986. Do all those people work direct to you?—Direct to me, and in my own frames.

6987. Mr. *Mundy.*] The head of the family?—There are many of them who are journeymen.

6988. *Chairman.*] What do you mean by the word "shop"?—These frames are all worked in what we call shops.

6989. Wherever a frame is working you call that place a shop?—Yes.

6990. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Even if it is working in a dwelling-house?—Yes; the goods are often sent in by a carrier; in the case of a single hand it would be more expense than profit to him to bring his work in himself, and therefore he sometimes sends it in by a carrier; if I were to require him to bring his work in himself, he would be out of pocket every week; if a man has two frames, one of which he is working himself, and another he lets to another person, he is a middleman to a certain extent.

6991. An individual employing two or three frames has been called a master stocking-maker?—Until lately they were all called master stocking-makers, and then they were called bagmen, because they carried their work in a bag; if you were at Nottingham, you would see them coming in with a bag round their shoulders.

6992. During your experience of the trade, has the system of the employment of middlemen increased or lessened?—It has decidedly increased, from the very great increase that has taken place in the amount of work.

6993. Lord *J. Manners.*] Were the people to whom the wages of which you have spoken were paid, all middlemen?—I take the shop, and the whole earnings of that shop, and I then take the average from that; a man comes in with the work perhaps of eight or 10 different frames. I do not know who is working them; but I know they must be men, or clever women, from the quality of the work they bring in; or they may be children, and if they are I know them to be so from the sort of work they do.

6994. Those are the sums of money which you pay to the middlemen?—Yes; the rent having been deducted.

6995. Before the middlemen pay the workpeople, would there be any deductions made by them from those sums of money?—There may be; in the case of journeymen, and persons not of their own families, of course there would be; but the rent has been deducted by me in this calculation.

6996. Are you able to give us any idea to what those deductions would amount?—There would be the rent of the frame; and there would be a small amount, of from 3 *d.* to 6 *d.* a week, for taking out and bringing in the work, according to the distance and the sort of work; if they find the man a shop to put his frame in, then, of course, he will have to pay for standing, as it is called; but if he has his frame at his own house, he will not; but then if he has to pay those charges he saves them in rent; he lives in a lodging, or perhaps has only a bed to sleep in, and no home besides that.

6997. When you say that 10 *s.* 11 ½ *d.* is the average of the wages which you paid to these working people, you mean that you paid that sum, subject to further deductions, such as you have specified?—If the parties receive accommodation being journeymen, and not having homes of their own.

6998. It must not be supposed, then, that 10 *s.* 11 ½ *d.* is the average net wages of the workmen?—That sum would be liable to the deductions I have specified.

6999. Mr. *Biggs.*] The 34 frames you have referred to were worked by men, women, and children?—Yes.

7000. Is that 10 *s.* 11 ½ *d.* the average amount earned by each of the 34 frames?—Yes, after the rent has been deducted.

7001. What would be the average wages of a skilled, able-bodied workman?—From 15 *s.* to 1 *l.* a week; I have paid as much as 32 *s.* a week to a man who, on an average, will not earn 7 *s.*; but it is notorious that they do not work their whole time; there are very few of them who will, and perhaps owing to the sedentary nature of their employment, it is requisite that they should get out; they get tired.

7002. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are you acquainted with any inventions in machinery that are progressing in Nottingham?—We hear a great deal of them.

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7003. Have they as yet had any effect upon your branch of the trade?—Not at all; and I am of opinion that they never can touch our branch; that is the highest branch; quality is everything with us.

7004. Mr. *Biggs.*] Yours is the wrought-hose branch?—Yes.

7005. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Requiring fashion and minute attention?—Yes; and requiring that every course should be made perfect. In order to show that, the workmen are perfectly cognisant of what we are doing at the warehouse, and the prices, and that they could, if they pleased, come into the warehouse and complain. I will mention that some years ago I and my hands were on such terms that I gave them a tea drinking; some of them came 14 or 15 miles to drink tea with me; the journeymen and all came in. I do not think there was a journeyman missing, and I told them then before their masters, that if they had the slightest grievance to complain of they had only to come to the warehouse, and it should be redressed as far as possible. I think that twice in the course of 40 years we have had complaints made to us by the workmen, that on examination we found to be well-founded; we discovered that one man had been cheating his journeymen out of part of the price, and therefore we took all his frames away, and he died in the workhouse afterwards.

7006. Have you any reason to suppose, from your knowledge of the trade, that the charges made by the middlemen are excessive?—Not the least.

7007. You consider that those charges are necessary as a remuneration to the middleman for services rendered by him to the journeymen?—I believe that the journeymen are benefited by the system that is pursued, and that none of them could bring in their work themselves for the same cost as the charge that is made to them.

7008. You are aware that it is contemplated by some parties to abolish these charges by legislation; how, in such a case, would a middleman be remunerated?—I believe the thing would prove so perfectly ridiculous that it would be impossible to act upon it.

7009. Do you not think that if frame-rents were abolished there would be a reduction in the wages of the workmen to the same amount?—There must be; it is an absolute necessity.

7010. And that would create considerable confusion, would it not?—Great confusion; on talking to the men, I find that they would be willing enough to have the frame-rent taken off if they could get it into their own pockets, but I have never found one who desired the existing system to be changed on its being explained to him that if it were it is not likely he would have the frame-rent in his pocket.

7011. You think that any legislation on the subject would be mischievous as regards the workmen rather than useful?—Yes.

7012. Inasmuch as it would be more likely to tend to a reduction of wages than to an increase?—Most decidedly.

7013. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you acquainted with the trade in general, or is your knowledge confined to your own immediate district?—It is confined to Nottinghamshire chiefly; but I have a little knowledge of the trade of Derbyshire.

7014. You cannot speak from any knowledge of your own of the practice in Leicestershire?—Not at all.

7015. Have middlemen frames of their own in many instances?—They have. I employ some of them myself.

7016. Is it your custom to give out materials simply for your own frames, or for those that belong to the middlemen?—If I employ them I must give them materials to work up.

7017. Do you occasionally give out more materials than are requisite for your own frames?—I am always employing more frames than my own; I have many frames of my own standing now, and I employ the middlemen's frames, because it suits me.

7018. You have spoken of a statement of prices; is that statement generally in use?—It is in universal use throughout Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire; I do not mean to say that the price that is put down in the list is paid, because it is not and never was; but that is the starting point; if we make a reduction or an addition, it is so much on or off that.

7019. Do you consider that a middleman is bound to give the same price at he receives at the warehouse for the work he superintends?—Yes.

7020. You consider that he is under an obligation to do it?—Yes; and if I new that he was not doing so, I should remedy it.

7021. Do you suspect that he ever does otherwise?—I do not; I have heard any rumours that it is done; but I have never met with a single instance in nich I could find that there was any foundation for it. There was a report of e tea-party to which I have referred, and of what I then said to the journey-en; and it was printed in the paper that circulates amongst the stocking-akers generally; but I have not had a single complaint made to me since.

7022. Is it not possible that a middleman taking out work, and having frames his own, would, in order to procure employment for them, take the work out a lower price than he would if he had not that inducement?—I do not think would, for he would soon be stopped if he did; the committee would be at m immediately; the working men's committee would pull him up very soon.

7023. Is that at Nottingham?—The three counties; they call themselves the hree Counties Committee; there is a lot of them who have never done a roke of work for a number of years; it is a capital post; they get half as uch again as they could earn by working themselves; they are always at ork trying to find grievances, and very often make them.

7024. If it were not for them, a middleman might take out work at a lower rice than he otherwise would, for the sake of employing his own frames, might e not?—So might any man.

7025. But he is prevented by the interference of this committee?—Yes; there no doubt that men are now working under price; and they told me that ney had spent 700 *l.* to stop that, in the case of one man; but the workmen will o to him for work, because it is the best they can get.

7026. That would have the effect of lowering the prices generally, would it ot?—If it were done to any extent it would; and if it were not for almost a ownright determination on the part of masters to keep the wages up, I do not nink it could be avoided, because the loss is so heavy on their stock when a eduction takes place.

7027. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have stated that your workpeople are subject o no other deductions than frame-rent?—Not by me.

7028. But of course they are subject to deductions by the middleman?—Yes.

7029. Are you able to tell us exactly what those deductions are?—I could ot, because, as I said before, every one of them makes his own bargain accord-ng to what he wants; one man will merely want a frame, and to have his work rought in and taken out; another will want a standing, fire and candle, and at, and so on.

7030. In your opinion, are the deductions which are made so managed that workman at the end of the week will know accurately what he has to receive?—Perfectly, to a halfpenny, and he does know.

7031. And you have never heard any complaints from them to the contrary?—No; if I had, I should remedy it if possible.

7032. Suppose, instead of that, the workpeople were subject to uncertain charges by middlemen, and were subject to what is called stint, would they hen, in your opinion, have a fair ground of complaint?—I should not like to suppose that anybody was doing it when I do not know of its being done.

7033. Mankind is not altogether infallible, and therefore it is possible, is it ot, that there may be such cases?—It is possible.

7034. Would the working men, in that case, have a fair ground of complaint?—Against the middleman they would, and they might call him a great rogue, nd leave him, as they do. Those journeymen are here to-day and gone to-morrow; there is no tie whatever, and many of them will run into debt with these parties, and then run away directly.

7035. Mr. *Biggs.*] Are not the charges of the middlemen uniformly and generally known?—They are.

7036. You said just now that they were various, leaving a wrong impression on the minds of the Committee; what you mean to say is, that for the same services the charges are uniform?—For the same services the charges are, I believe, uniform, but I could not speak positively to it.

Mr. J. R. Allen.

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7037. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is there any statement of charges as well as of prices?—I cannot say I ever saw one.

7038. Mr. *Cobbett.*] You are well acquainted with the body of working people in Nottingham, I suppose?—Yes.

7039. You call them framework-knitters?—Yes.

7040. Do you carry on business in Nottingham?—Yes.

7041. What, in your opinion, is the feeling of the general body of framework-knitters with regard to any legislative interference such as has been proposed?—I believe that if you were to go and tell them that the effect of this Act of Parliament would be to do away with frame-rent, there would not be one who would not sign a petition directly; but if you explained to them that by the passing of such an Act their wages would be reduced to meet the rent, they would tell you that they would much rather that things should remain as they are.

7042. Do you know that they have presented petitions to Parliament on this subject?—Yes.

7043. Have there been any public meetings held for the purpose of considering it?—Yes; these men are always getting up meetings, and are very good speakers.

7044. How do you know?—Because they come to the warehouse to me, and I know the gift they have; I know I cannot talk with them.

7045. Do they ever suggest to you that it would be better that the frame-rents and charges should be abolished?—At the last turn-out a deputation came to me, and brought a lot of journeymen with them, and I said, "Why not go to the middlemen first, and make them pay as much as we do?" One of them said, "I work to a middleman, who pays me as good wages as any man in Nottingham," and I think half a dozen of them stepped up and made the same reply, and I then told them they were a precious lot of liars to come to me with such stories as they told on former occasions.

7046. Sir *H. Halford.*] Have you read the evidence which is contained in the report of Mr. Muggeridge, the Commissioner?—No, I have not.

7047. Why; has it escaped your attention?—I heard such a character of it as convinced me that it was not worth while to trouble myself with it; I would undertake to get up plenty of evidence of barbarity and enormity in any county in England, if they would pay me for it.

7048. The report contains the evidence of a very great number of respectable parties?—One party, Mr. Hannay, I do not consider competent to give evidence with reference to the hosiery trade; the parties who succeeded him, I know, have paid their quota towards the expenses of opposing your Bills.

7049. You were so impressed with the notion that the evidence was contrary to your views that you treated it with contempt and would not read it?—Yes; from the class of evidence that was given, I was convinced that it was made up by agitators.

7050. Would it not have been as well to have looked at it yourself a little?—I doubt it; I think it would have been a dead loss of time.

7051. You treated it with contempt?—Perfect contempt.

7052. *Chairman.*] You say you never give out partial work, but that when trade is bad you stop the frames altogether?—I never give out partial work, nor do I believe that such a custom is prevalent.

7053. What work do these men take themselves to when their frames are stopped?—In many cases they are obliged to go to the parish. That puts me in mind of another thing I should wish to mention. I should like to refer you to another report, a report of the Council of Education for 1848, 1849, and 1850, and you will there find a statement as to the average pauperism of the kingdom. Derby stands No. 1, Nottingham No. 6, the intervening counties being mining counties on the coast; so that we have a smaller amount of pauperism than any county in the kingdom except Derby, Cornwall, Monmouth, Cheshire, and Cardigan.

7054. Lord *J. Manners.*] Those figures include the population of the whole county, do they not?—Yes; but the hosiery manufacture is carried on throughout the greater part of the county of Nottingham, and I dare say the agricultural labourers are better paid in our county than they are in some others, because they come in competition with higher paid labourers.

7055. *Chairman.*] You said you thought that middlemen would not carry in the

he work unless they had the power to get recompensed for the services they perform?—Certainly not.

7056. Might they not get it by other means than by stoppage from wages; or instance, by exacting beforehand compensation for the work done by them? —I doubt whether many of these journeymen could pay it; they are notoriously mprudent men.

7057. If they receive so much as you mention, 15 *s.* or 20 *s.* a week, is there nything to prevent that?—But many of them do not earn so much as that, ecause they are improvident, and will not work if there is anything going on; hey will be off to cricket or a foot-race, or anything rather than work.

7058. But if they were better instructed as to what was to their interest, they night do it, might they not?—Decidedly; but even then I do not think you ould trust them. I know that journeymen very often run away and leave their mployers in debt.

7059. You having stated that you get only five per cent. profit upon the apital you invest in frames, which is the ordinary rate of interest, that, of ourse, is not a better return than you get from the same amount of capital mployed in other branches of your business?—If it were not for the conve- ience of having frames in order to get our work done, I would not have one; I would remove my capital and throw it into the trade.

7060. Therefore, of course, so far as profit goes, there would be no indisposi- ion on your part to furnish materials to working men using their own frames? —If I could trust them. I may say that 40 or 50 years ago a great many frames were bought by the operatives; they formed frame clubs.

7061. What was the result of that?—Practically it was found to be anything but a profitable investment for them, and gradually they sold nearly all their frames. I have had many offered to me; parties to whom they have belonged have begged me to take them rather than keep them themselves, for they cannot repair them when they are out of repair.

7062. Did any of those clubs exist within your own memory?—I can remember them very well when I was a boy; and my father was always of opinion that it would be a very injurious thing, in consequence of its introducing more frames than were required, and that the workmen to whom they belonged would work lower than they ought; and that has been the effect of it.

7063. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there any framesmiths who own frames?—Yes.

7064. Are they let to the workmen?—They are; but those who let them generally repent it; they cannot get the rent. They will let them to me at a less price than they will let them to a stocking-maker at any time.

7065. Is it your practice when they are so let to underlet them to the work- men?—Yes.

7066. At the price you pay?—No, at the regular price.

7067. At an advance upon the price you pay?—Yes; and I should think that a very legitimate mode of making a profit if I could get them low enough to pay me.

7068. You think it is a legitimate mode of making a profit to get a profit from frames apart from the profit arising from the sale of goods?—Perfectly legitimate.

[*The Witness delivered in the following Paper:*]

AVERAGE EARNINGS of 34 Hands per Week for from 12 to 16 Weeks consecutively, consisting of

8 Frame 24 G and 26 G on Hose and Half-hose.
2 „ 36 G on Shirt.
24 „ 30 to 40 G on Hose and Half-hose.

	£.	s.	d.
34 Frames, Total Gross - - - - - -	20	6	1
Deduct Frame Rent - - - -	1	13	-
	£.		
34 at 10 *s.* 11 ½ *d.* - - - - -	18	13	1
	18	12	7
	-	-	6

Mr. *John Heard*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *John Heard.*

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7069. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—In Nottingham.

7070. What is your profession or station there; are you a manufacturer?—I am not a manufacturer now; I have been during the whole course of my life until lately.

7071. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How long ago is it since you ceased to be a manufacturer?—In 1844 I ceased for six years; I then began again, and ceased last Lady-day.

7072. So that you have been practically acquainted with the hosiery trade for more than 50 years?—Yes.

7073. You are also, I believe, a magistrate for the town of Nottingham?—I am a magistrate.

7074. Having been in the trade for so long a period, perhaps you can tell the Committee what has been the invariable charge that has been made for frame rents in Nottingham?—The invariable charge has been 9 *d.* a week for what we call coarse frames, and 1 *s.* a week for 30-gauge frames and upwards.

7075. *Chairman.*] What is the gauge of the coarse frames?—Twenty-fours and twenty-sixes.

7076. Mr. *Cheetham.*] During that long period, has there been any change in this charge made for frames?—Not that I know of; I never heard of any in Nottinghamshire.

7077. When you commenced business, I believe there was no frame in existence that made more than one stocking at a time?—I believe not.

7078. But of late years frames have been made sufficiently wide to make several stockings?—They have.

7079. In that case, have the charges made for rent been in proportion?—Yes.

7080. What has been the principle which has actuated you in your purchase of frames; has it been for the sake of the profit to be derived from the investment, that is, for the sake of rent, or for the convenience of managing your business?—Never in any case for the sake of the rent; I never considered that it was a wise investment for that alone. When I purchased frames, it was always when I wanted such as would produce a particular quality and description of work.

7081. The frame being your own, gave you a greater control over the class of work to be produced?—Yes, certainly.

7082. What might be the extent to which you held frames?—Latterly, I held about 1,500.

7083. Did any portion of your workmen work direct to the warehouse, or did they work generally through middlemen?—Some of them worked direct to the warehouse; but a very few of them only are single frames worked by one hand; many of those who are not called middlemen have a number of frames for their wives and children, and family.

7084. In the case of those hands who work direct to the warehouse, there was no deduction, I suppose, beyond the frame rent?—Certainly not.

7085. Can you give any information as to what might be the charges deducted by the middlemen?—I do not know the charges deducted by the middlemen generally; I inquired last year of one or two what they charge.

7086. I believe the greater portion of your production was of a fine and delicate fabric?—Yes, a large portion was fine.

7087. And consequently the frames which you employed were delicate machines, and required great care?—Yes, many of them did; they all require care to keep them dry and clean, of course.

7088. And the amount of wages paid to the workmen formed a very large proportion of the cost of the article you produced?—Certainly.

7089. Was there not, under these circumstances, at all times a strong incentive for you to keep these frames going, even in times of depression?—In times of depression, when the work produced by the frames could not be sold, it would be an object to give out work to the men for the sake of keeping the frames going, both with a view to the rent of them, and likewise with a view to the employment of the men, and also in order that the frames should be kept in repair.

7090. And

7090. And you having capital in the business, were enabled in those times of depression to keep, under those circumstances, your men generally employed?—To a certain extent.

7091. When a time occurred of very serious depression, did you stint them, or did you suspend the working of the frames?—It was the general practice to suspend the working.

7092. So that it was not your custom to give out partial employment and to deduct full rent?—Certainly not.

7093. In cases of sickness how did you act?—We always considered that we had a claim for the rent in cases of sickness; but if a workman made out a case that he was really sick, we did not take the full rent, generally speaking, but did that which we thought was fair and equitable.

7094. That was always decided on a statement and examination of the case?—Yes.

7095. The employment in some degree of these middlemen, I suppose, has arisen from the fact that a single framework-knitter having no house of his own in which he could take care of his frame, has offered his services to some man who could find him house-room?—Many frames are worked by women and children, and single men who have no means of taking care of a frame, and therefore they necessarily get work from another man living in the same village, and work perhaps in his shop; and hence arises the necessity for middlemen; and not only so, but I think it is cheaper for them to pay the charges of the middlemen than it would be to take their work in to the warehouse at Nottingham, a distance, in many cases, of eight or ten miles.

7096. The charges which are made by the middleman are, in fact, a return for certain advantages which he gives to the workman?—Certainly.

7097. You heard the last witness state that there was a published list of prices by which the workmen were paid?—Yes.

7098. Do the workmen know what the prices are that are put down in that standard list?—The workmen know what the standard list is, but it is no longer a standard; it was not a standard many months after it was made.

7099. Do they know the deviations that are made from it, either in reduction or advance?—Yes.

7100. So that if a middleman were to deviate from the list by which the payment to the workmen is regulated, the workmen would have an opportunity of knowing what that deviation was?—I think they would not have an opportunity of knowing it from that printed list, because it has been so frequently varied; sometimes it is higher and sometimes it is lower, so that, as a general rule, they hardly know what it is.

7101. How then would a workman have any check, as between the middleman with whom he contracts and himself, with reference to the price?—He would have a check by knowing, as persons in the trade do know, what the price usually paid is by the different manufacturers.

7102. And he could at all times resort to you if he thought he had any ground of complaint?—Of course; we always wish the workmen to apply to us if they choose to know the price we pay for the work, and we have always taken care, as far as we could do so, that they should not be defrauded by the middlemen. We always considered that it was an advantage to us; we knew that the best workmen would have the best prices, and that the better the price paid the more likely were we to get good workmen.

7103. In any questions in dispute, arising out of an advance or reduction of wages, has the workman ever made this frame rent a ground of grievance and complaint?—I never heard it.

7104. Have you ever had any discussion with either of your middlemen as to the charges which he makes?—Yes, I have.

7105. And I think one of them has shown you his books?—One of them has shown me his books.

7106. What, on inquiry, did you find to be his system?—I found, that for the frames for which I charged 1*s.* 9*d.* a week, he charged 3*s.* 3*d.*; he paid 7*d.* a week I believe for winding the cotton, and 2*d.* a week to his landlord for a place for the frame to stand. It is the custom in that part of the country when a man takes a shop from a landlord that will hold from 8 to 10 frames, that he shall charge so much per frame for the use of the shop.

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7107. Did the middleman, in the case to which you refer, charge the journeyman 3*s.* 3*d.* besides the winding, and so on?—No, that was included.

7108. Those two items amounting to 9*d.* added to the 1*s.* 9*d.* would make 2*s.* 6*d*?—Yes.

7109. How do you account for the remaining 9*d*?—That was the profit that he got for his time and his responsibility.

7110. Sir *H. Halford.*] Was that included in the frame rent?—No; not in the frame rent; it was included in the 3*s.* 3*d.* which he charged.

7111. What was the specific head under which that 3 *s.* 3*d.* was charged?—One shilling and ninepence for frame rent, 7*d.* for winding, 2*d.* for the rent of the standing for the frame, and 9*d.* for the middleman's profit.

7112. What they call the taking-in charge?—Yes.

7113. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In fact, that 9*d.* is the amount of his own earnings or wages?—Yes.

7114. Sir *H. Halford.*] Was that 9*d.* upon the amount of goods taken in, or how was it regulated?—Ninepence a week.

7115. Let the amount of work done be what it might?—Yes.

7116. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are the charges to which you have alluded as charges made by the middlemen well understood among the workmen?—I am told that they are very well understood. There is hardly a workman in the neighbourhood who does not understand and know the prices paid; they have every opportunity of knowing by inquiring among their neighbours and by discussing the matter.

7117. So that the charges made by the middleman are nearly as well ascertained as the amount of rent to be paid for the use of the frame?—Yes, nearly so.

7118. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is the charge for taking-in commonly a fixed charge, or is it a charge at so much a dozen for the work?—Sometimes it is a fixed charge, at so much per week, and sometimes at so much per dozen.

7119. Is that left to the choice of the man who makes the charge?—It is left to the agreement the workman choose to make with him; in one part of the country it is generally, perhaps always, so much a week; in another part of the country, where many stockings are made, they are made on three different frames, the top in one, the middle in another, and the foot on the third frame, and in that case it is usual for the middleman to charge so much per dozen.

7120. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that the system varies; in some cases it is charged upon the frame itself, and in the other cases it is charged upon the number of dozens produced by the frame?—Yes.

7121. Sir *H. Halford.*] In a case in which a man has not full employment, is the fixed charge of 9 *d.* a week still made?—I do not know how that is.

7122. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That rests with the middleman?—Yes; he makes his agreement with the journeyman as he pleases, or as they mutually agree.

7123. Has any workman ever had occasion to appeal to you as to the price you give to the middleman?—Yes, sometimes.

7124. And did you give him the information he desired?—There was one case I remember to have occurred some years ago, in which I heard, by report, that a certain person was making a large quantity of fine work, and was getting the work done for a less price than that usually paid; I inquired into the matter, and found that for some year or more past, he had been defrauding them to the extent of 20 *l.*, and he paid them the money back again.

7125. In the case to which you refer, the middleman had paid them less than you had actually paid him?—Yes.

7126. And the check against that is by the workmen making a direct appeal to you?—Yes.

7127. I suppose that at all times it is your interest, as well as your desire, that a workman should receive good wages, inasmuch as he would produce better work?—Certainly; it is not that the men will produce better work, but that if they have the best wages, that will attract the best workmen.

7128. So that in that way your interest is invariably bound up with the interest of the workman, and you have a clear inducement to prevent as far as you can any improper treatment they may experience at the hands of the middlemen?—Of course.

7129. You having been a large frameholder, can perhaps tell us whether the atements which have been made to the Committee, to the effect that immense ·ofits have been derived from the investment of capital in frames, are accordg to your experience correct or not?—According to my experience they are ɔt correct; the immense profits that have been stated to have been made, ıve been spoken to by witnesses from Leicester: I know nothing about the eicester trade, and therefore I cannot say anything with regard to it.

7130. During your long experience, has the selling value of frames always ɔen maintained, or have you had to submit to depreciation in their value?—I believe that now their value is greater than it was 50 years ago. The selling alue of frames has varied, and continually varies, according to the state of ·ade; but new frames could not be bought at so low a price now as they could 0 years ago.

7131. How do you account for that?—By iron and materials being dearer, nd the workmanship for making the frames being dearer also.

7132. Do your frames require a considerable outlay in the way of repairs?—Certainly.

7133. When you have taken into account those outlays, and the amount of apital originally invested in frames, does the result leave you anything approximating to a profit of 50 per cent.?—Never.

7134. Not even connected with the manufacture of the stocking?—No.

7135. The statement which has been made to the Committee is, not that the ·eturn for frame rent as an investment has been profitable to them, but that whenever a party has begun to manufacture, the connexion between the frame rent and he manufacture has produced this very large result?—I am not aware of it.

7136. In your experience, you have not found that to be the case?—Certainly not.

7137. It has been suggested that even assuming the evils spoken of with regard to deducting full rent in the case of partial employment and in times of sickness not to exist, the deduction in the shape of rent from the earnings of the workmen, has at all times been a source of great annoyance and irritation to them; and that the legislation which has been proposed would, at all events, have the effect of producing a better feeling and a better understanding between the employers and the employed; what is your opinion upon that subject?—I never heard that it was an occasion of annoyance and irritation; I never have been told up to the present time that it was an occasion of annoyance.

7138. And not having found it so in your own experience, you do not see any reason or justification for legislating on this question?—That would depend on what the legislation is; I certainly think there is no occasion for it, and I think it can do no good; if the object of the legislation proposed is to put down the middlemen, then I say it is perfectly absurd and ridiculous; it would be utterly impossible for Parliament, let it do what it might, to do away with middlemen; men, women, and children who have not the opportunity of taking frames into their own houses must work somewhere.

7139. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are speaking of a proposition for direct legislation with a view to put down middlemen?—Yes; I have heard that named.

7140. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have had considerable experience, have you not, as a magistrate, in the town of Nottingham?—Yes.

7141. Have complaints between the workmen and their employers upon this question come before you at all?—No; the only complaints that I think I have heard of, have been made by the employers, who have complained of the men having embezzled the material which has been given out to them.

7142. The employers were subjected occasionally to the annoyance of parties not returning the material which was given out to them; is that so?—Certainly.

7143. And that, you say, has been the chief source of dispute?—The chief source. You are aware that there is an Act of Parliament which prevents any manufacturer, or any relation of a manufacturer, from sitting in judgment on cases of the sort.

7144. But still being in court, you can state whether the question of deductions which has been referred to so much in the evidence given before us, and the complaint as to the frame rent, have come under the notice of the magistrates?—I never heard of it.

7145. Sir *H. Halford.*] In your experience, have you ever known that Act made use of, with regard to the wages of the workmen. I think that Act is

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divided into two branches; its object partly was, to secure the property of the employer, and partly the wages of the workmen; have you ever known any appeal made under that Act, with regard to the wages of the workmen?—I do not know to what act you are alluding.

7146. The object of the Act is, to secure the property of the manufacturers, and the wages of the workmen; you have spoken of one branch of the Act, with regard to the property of the manufacturer, where workmen have been charged with embezzlement, having been appealed to?—Yes.

7147. What I want to know is, whether you have ever known the other branch of the Act put in force with regard to the wages of the workmen?—Yes, I have known of workmen coming before the magistrates to complain of the masters not paying them what was their due; but their complaint never was about rent or deductions, but merely that the masters would not take in the work paying for it the price they had agreed to pay.

7148. Has the Act been operative on behalf of the workmen in those cases?—Yes, where there was not a good defence. The defence, I recollect, made by the manufacturers in almost every case was, that the work was not made of a good quality, and therefore that the men were not entitled to be paid the price that the manufacturers had agreed to give for it; the work being of a bad quality, the manufacturer would not pay the money he had agreed to pay, although he would have done so without hesitation if the work had been of a good quality.

7149. Are you aware of any instance in which a set-off has been pleaded on account of charges?—No.

7150. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it your opinion that if any attempt is made to carry out what is called a net system of payment to the workmen, the rent and other deductions which are now made would necessarily be allowed for in framing a scale of net wages?—It must be allowed for in some way or other.

7151. So that, after arriving at a net scale of wages to be paid, the position of the workmen would really be no better than it is now; is that so?—I do not think it could be better; I should rather think it would be worse, because the hosiers, having to make a fresh agreement with the workmen, would be likely to make it rather against the workmen than against themselves.

7152. So that your opinion upon that point, and that which you have previously expressed, as to there being no irritating feeling between you and your workmen upon this question, leads you to the conclusion that there is no necessity for legislation on this point?—Certainly, I feel there is no necessity for it; and with reference to the question you have just put, I would say that I do not know at all how legislation could take place without condemning property of very considerable value. I have sold my own frames this present year for a very large sum of money, and supposing an Act were to pass whereby the parties purchasing these frames were unable to make any rent from them in any way, it would be very unfair to the parties who have purchased those frames from me.

7153. Do you coincide with the opinion which has been expressed by some of the parties who have been examined before this Committee, that these deductions have been one of the chief causes of the reduction of wages, and the depressed condition of the workmen?—No; I am not aware that there can have been any cause for a reduction of wages.

7154. When wages have been reduced, to what cause do you attribute it?—It has been always owing to the slackness of demand.

7155. For some years past have you had to encounter a new source of competition in the German manufacture?—That has been the case for many years.

7156. Of course those hosiers who have the largest number of frames, and the greatest amount of capital engaged in the trade, have always an interest more strongly running with the workmen than is the case where a man has a smaller capital and a less amount of machinery?—Yes, they have an interest, because it is desirable on their part that their frames should be continued in work, and therefore they will give out work frequently, when, if they had no such interest, they would not do so.

7157. So that you altogether disclaim the notion that has been suggested, that the idea of spreading work over a great number of frames operates for a moment as any inducement to a large manufacturer in carrying on his business?—

usiness?—I should think not; I am not aware that such a thing is generally one; but at the same time, I cannot say it is not done in any case.

7158. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the selling value of a frame, if I may ask uch a question; I mean such frames as are used in the business with which ou are acquainted?—I had my frames valued a short time ago; the lowest was alued at 15*s.*, and the highest at 27*l.* 10*s.*

7159. I suppose the frame that was valued at 15*s.* was not in working condiion at all?—No.

7160. But I am speaking of frames that are available?—It depends entirely pon the quality of the frame, and the order in which it is; a frame may have hat we call a good carcass; it may be put into condition by a certain expense eing laid out upon it; or the carcass may be a bad one, and not worth epairing at all; what the value of a frame would be would depend upon its uality, and the condition in which it was.

7161. You are chiefly conversant with the better quality of hose?—There is ery little made at Nottingham lower than 24 gauges.

7162. It is generally of the wrought-hose character?—There are many vrought hose made, and many other sort of hose that we do not call wrought ose; they are termed straight-downs.

7163. Those are of a very inferior kind, are they not?—Yes.

7164. But still they are made to a considerable extent at Nottingham?—Yes.

7165. In cotton?—In cotton.

7166. Mr. *Biggs.*] I think you are opposed to any legislation on this subject?—I am.

7167. You think it would do no good?—Not to the workmen.

7168. Will you explain to the Committee what, in your opinion, would be its operation, assuming frame rents to be abolished by Act of Parliament, upon the workmen, and upon the trade?—I really cannot say what would be the probable operation of it; it would depend upon the determination of the owners of frames. But I do not conceive that it is possible to abolish frame rents by Act of Parliament, or by any other means. Persons who have property in frames will endeavour in some way or other to get an advantage by it.

7169. Do you not think that the workmen's wages would be reduced to the same extent?—I should presume so; I think there is very little doubt of that, if they were not reduced to a greater extent.

7170. Mr. *Mundy.*] The majority of your frames are scattered over country villages, are they not?—Yes.

7171. In Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire?—Yes, for 100 miles in circumference.

7172. What sort of intercourse can you have with the workmen who work in your frames in the more remote parts, in the county of Derby, for instance; I suppose you cannot have much intercourse with them when they are at such a distance from you?—They bring the work to the warehouse, and take out fresh material to go on with. That is all the intercourse we have generally with them. Our intercourse is with the man who takes the work.

7173. Does he work direct to the warehouse?—Yes.

7174. What proportion of workmen using your frames work direct to the warehouse?—I do not know the proportion; I never examined what the proportions were at all.

7175. Do the majority work through middlemen or direct?—The large majority work through middlemen.

7176. Can you tell me the villages in the county of Derby to which you refer?—They are some 30 or 40 miles from Nottingham; at Ashford, for instance, and other places in that neighbourhood. Forty miles from Nottingham they have frames.

7177. Of course you are obliged to carry on the business there through the intervention of a middleman?—Yes; unless there is a man who has frames for the use of his own family only.

7178. Suppose a workman is desirous of making a complaint to you, what means has he of so doing?—By the post.

7179. Have instances occurred within your knowledge of complaints being made by persons working at places so far distant from Nottingham?—I do not

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recollect any instances of that kind, except the one to which I have already referred, where a man had been giving out work under a different denomination and getting it made at a lower price than the price paid at the warehouse; it was not his charges that were complained of, but the complaint was that the work he brought in to us, which professed to be of a certain quality, he got made by workmen of an inferior quality; 2 *s.* a dozen less.

7180. Where was that from?—Close to Nottingham.

7181. In those more remote localities the trade is conducted entirely through the intervention of middlemen, is it not?—Yes, except that in some cases a man has a frame for himself and his own family; we do not call such persons middlemen, although, in fact, they may be said to be so, because they receive the work, and give it out to others, but the work is generally done in the man's own house.

7182. You cannot tell us exactly the charges that are made by the middlemen to persons working at that distance, can you?—I cannot tell what charges are made generally; but whatever they be, whether they be more or less, of course it is with the approbation of the workmen.

7183. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have no reason to suppose that those charges are excessive, or that they are more than a fair remuneration for the services of the middlemen?—I should think not; if they were, our workmen would refuse to pay them, or they would look out for work elsewhere; and then when trade was good, and all the men were employed, they would not be able to get workmen.

7184. If the charges of middlemen were to be abolished by Act of Parliament, how would a middleman be remunerated for those necessary services which he performs for the journeymen?—I do not know in what way he would be remunerated.

7185. Do you see any other way in which he could be remunerated except by a reduction of the workmen's wages to some extent?—None other.

7186. The effect of such legislation would be to create two prices, would it not, the warehouse price and the middleman's price?—It might.

7187. Must it not necessarily be so?—The middleman himself must necessarily be paid in some form or other, and very likely it would take the form of two prices; one the price paid at the warehouse, and the other the price paid by the middlemen to the workmen.

7188. That would create a good deal of confusion and dissatisfaction, would it not?—It would create confusion and dissatisfaction, and things would be worse for the workmen than they are at the present time.

7189. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not possible that the middleman might be paid by the manufacturer as his agent?—I do not know; I think that would not answer very well; I think it would be an expensive way of producing the same effect.

7190. Why so?—Because the middleman who has to take out the work has to receive the work; and he sees, probably, on most days, how the work is going on; an agent from a manufacturer could not be at two places at once, and could not superintend a large quantity of work in any way better than the middleman now does, nor so well, indeed.

7191. *Chairman.*] A middleman superintends the work of several manufacturers, does he?—In some cases; some middlemen work wholly to one manufacturer, and others work to several.

7192. Supposing the business of any one manufacturer in any particular place to be important enough to employ the whole time of a middleman, what difficulty do you see in the way of the manufacturer remunerating him by salary?—There would be no difficulty in it, only it would be very likely to prove more expensive than the system on which the business is at present conducted.

7193. Mr. *Biggs.*] The abolition of frame rents would probably lead to greater irregularity of employment, I presume, than that which exists at the present moment?—I think it would.

7194. That would be necessarily worse for the workmen, and would probably lead to a reduction of wages?—There is no doubt it must lead to a reduction of wages.

7195. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have been present, have you not, when evidence has been given from Hinckley, and that district?—No; I never was here but one day, and that was when a gentleman from Leicester was examined.

7196. We

7196. We have had statements made to us with reference to stinting and deducting full frame-rent for partial work; supposing such a state of things to exist in a district, have you been able to form any opinion as to the cause of it?—There can be no cause for it, I apprehend, but the flatness of trade.

7197. In your opinion, if these charges were to be done away with by legislation, would that flatness of trade have any effect upon the wages of the workmen?—Undoubtedly it would.

7198. So that a workman would have to submit to direct deductions from his wages, instead of there being this roundabout mode of arriving at the same result?—Certainly.

7199. Sir *H. Halford.*] But does it follow that the deductions would be to the same extent as the charges that are now made at Hinckley?—They may be to the same or to a greater extent.

7200. Or they may be to a less extent?—They may, but it is not probable that they would.

7201. Why not?—Because I think the charges that are now made, and which are generally paid, are as low as they can be.

7202. Is that your opinion with respect to Hinckley?—I do not know what they do at Hinckley.

7203. Supposing the charges made under the present system to be very large, do you not think it is possible that by another system being adopted the pressure upon the workmen might be abated?—I do not know; have what system you will, still there must be an agreement between the middlemen and the workmen as to the charges that are to be made, and as to the mode of conducting the business. I think that if a middleman was at all disposed to get the work done as cheaply as he possibly could, and to oppress his workmen as much as he could, he would have the same opportunity of doing it by an immediate reduction of wages as he has under the present system.

7204. *Chairman.*] The present system has this advantage to the industrious man, namely, that the more he works on his frame in the course of the week, the less heavily the frame-rent falls upon him; is not that so?—Certainly; there is a less per-centage.

7205. And if there were a reduced wage substituted, he would lose that encouragement to his industry, would he not?—He would.

7206. You have mentioned one case in which you found upon inquiry that a person had been getting, for a long period, as much as 20*l.* a year?—No, I think it was 20*l.* in the whole; that occurred some years ago, and it was a single instance; it was a case in which a man had evidently been cheating his workmen.

7207. I thought you had said that the 20*l.* had run on for some long period of time?—It was for some time.

7208. If the workmen had known what was the rate you were paying for a certain description of work, they would at once have remonstrated against his imposition, would they not?—I presume they would.

7209. Then would it not, do you think, be desirable to secure some mode by which the workmen should really know what is the rate you are paying for the work; you say you think they do?—I do not think it can be known better than it now is. In the case that I speak of we gave out work for one description or quality of goods, and he got the goods made by the workmen of an inferior quality, so that he paid the workmen the price paid for the inferior quality.

7210. Did not the workmen know the quality of their own produce?—No.

7211. They were not skilful enough in estimating the comparative merits of the fabric to be able to be aware that they were doing a superior quality of work when he was paying the price paid for an inferior quality?—The fact was, that we were paying the men for work made off 44-gauge frames a certain price, and he got it made by 42-gauge frames, and paid the workmen the 42-gauge price, receiving from us the 44-gauge price.

7212. Mr. *Cheetham.*] It was a misrepresentation of the gauge or quality, rather than any variation from the list price?—Certainly.

7213. Mr. *Biggs.*] That was an exceptional case, I suppose?—It was an exceptional case; I never heard of any other.

7214. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of the report of the Commissioner, and of the evidence that was taken before him?—No.

7215. You have never looked at it?—Never.

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7216. How is it that you forbore to look at it?—I never thought it would be of any advantage to me to look at it.

7217. *Chairman.*] You say you had 1,700 frames when you quitted the business?—Fifteen hundred.

7218. When you gave up business, did you break up your establishment and sell the frames in different parcels, or were they all taken by your successor in business?—They were all taken by my successor.

7219. Some of them, I think you say, were taken at a valuation as low as 15*s.*, and some as high as 26*l.*?—Yes.

7220. But an average price was taken for the whole, I suppose?—The average price for the whole was a little more than 10*l.* a frame.

7221. We have heard something about frame clubs that are said to have existed in old times; do you remember any of those clubs?—I remember hearing of them in times past.

7222. But you do not remember being privy to their actual working?—No, I never was in one, or connected with one at all; I know there were clubs to which men subscribed, in order to get frames of their own.

7223. This was among the working operatives?—Yes.

7224. Do you see any objection to the renewal of such a system, namely, of men uniting together, and by a kind of club managing their own concerns, thereby superseding the necessity for standing, or for supervision of any kind, the men working direct to the warehouse?—I do not see any objection to that at all.

7225. As I understand you to say that you get something inferior rather than superior to the usual trade profit, there would be no objection on the part of a manufacturer to supply materials to the members of such a club?—Not if the manufacturer was able to dispose of the work.

7226. He would be as willing to part with his frames to these men at a fair price as he would be to part with them to a middleman, would he not?—Every hosier in Nottingham would be glad to sell his frames at a fair price if he could get anybody to buy them.

7227. If you get no great profit by them, you have no special object in retaining them, and if these workmen could hold together so as to become possessors of their own frames, there would be no indisposition on the part of the manufacturer to deal with such men, and furnish them with materials for working up, instead of furnishing them to the middlemen?—I should consider not; but then, when we consider that few of the workmen are worth 5*l.*, I hardly think it would be possible to raise a club to buy 1,000*l.* worth of frames; to the principle there would be no objection.

7228. But such clubs did exist formerly, and therefore they might be re-established, might they not?—There existed such clubs when trade was good, and work was wanted. When I was first in the trade, and for some years afterwards, I think a manufacturer would pay 1*s.* a dozen extra for hose that was made off another person's frame; if a workman who had a frame went to a manufacturer to ask for work, the manufacturer would give him 1*s.* a dozen more than the regular price, but that practice has ceased many years, and is now quite done away with.

Mr. *James Christopher Street*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *J. C. Street.*

7229. *Chairman.*] DO you live at Nottingham?—I do.

7230. Are you engaged yourself in any branch of the hosiery trade?—Not myself; I am connected with the firm of Carver & Son, of Nottingham.

7231. Are they hosiers?—Large hosiers.

7232. In what relation do you stand to them?—I occupy two or three positions; I am cashier, bookkeeper, and manager of the machinery.

7233. Mr. *Cheetham.*] It comes within your duty to look after the machinery, does it not?—Yes, it does.

7234. How many frames have you under your superintendence?—Between 700 and 1,000.

7235. Are they all distributed in the villages round?—A great many of them are.

7236. Have you any factory at all?—We have not.

7237. Are

7237. Are all of these employed in the cotton, or are a portion of them employed in other descriptions of manufacture?—We make goods from cotton, merino, and spun silk.

7238. Is your charge for frame-rent the same as that which has been stated by the two previous witnesses?—Precisely.

7239. You make no difference between the material of merino and cotton?—None.

7240. Those rents, I think, have been stated to be 9*d.* for a frame under 30 gauge?—Yes.

7241. And 1*s.* if they are above that?—Yes.

7242. Are there any other deductions that you make, besides this rent?—No.

7243. What proportion of these bring in work direct to the warehouse?—I should think not more than a fifth of them.

7244. Then four-fifths are employed through the agency of middlemen?—Yes, or what are called master stocking-makers.

7245. That is, parties who have more than one frame under their control?—Yes.

7246. I suppose at times there have been discussions between you and the workmen, as to an advance of wages?—Yes.

7247. Have they ever told you that they considered this frame-rent as a deduction from their wages, and therefore that they wish for its abolition?—Never; I have frequently had in the warehouse, and in their own shops, conversations with middlemen and workmen themselves, relative to this question of frame-rents; and from my own experience of the opinion of the working men generally, I may say that the great majority are opposed to any legislation upon the subject; they are apprehensive of any interference, because they judge that the effect of it would be that the amount of their wages would be considerably reduced.

7248. From your conversation with them, do you think they see clearly that by the adoption of a net system of wages the existing deductions would be allowed for in arriving at that net system?—Yes.

7249. So that their position would not be really improved?—No.

7250. Would it, in your opinion, tend to remove a source of irritation, and create a better feeling between you and the workmen?—I think not; it would have rather a contrary effect.

7251. Do you see any difficulty in arriving at a net scale of payment?—It is utterly impossible to arrive at it; the class of hands varies so very considerably, the machinery is all so different, the class of work also is different, and the amount of time that men will work is so different, that it would be impossible to get at a net scale of payment.

7252. You have heard from the evidence given in this room how these complaints arise; first, as regards the giving out of partial employment and deducting full rent, what is the practice of your house?—We never give out part work.

7253. If your frames cannot be employed, owing to the want of demand, you suspend them?—Yes.

7254. How do you act with regard to cases of sickness?—We never charge; we make that our rule; we consider it almost a matter of right; we never charge a man during illness under any circumstances.

7255. It is a subject of examination, I suppose, in each particular case?—Yes; we first make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with the fact of the illness, and then if it is proved, we allow the rent at once in full.

7256. So that there is no charge made but what you think to be equitable and fair, as regards the frame-rent?—None.

7257. And in proportion as the man is industrious the deduction for frame-rent becomes so much less?—Yes; it is his interest to work as much as he can, for his charges will be just the same if he works only half a week.

7258. It is said that although the charge of 9*d.* and 1*s.* is fair in the case of able-bodied workmen, it is unfair with reference to persons of 12 or 14 years of age?—I can say from my own experience of 10 or 11 years in the hosiery trade, that I should strongly object to the use of our frames by children of that age. We find that young persons and old hands do more injury to a

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frame than good workmen will do, who make double or treble the quantity of work.

7259. In the case of sickness, when that case comes before you from a man who works direct to the warehouse, and who brings his own work in, you are dealing with the party who is making the complaint of sickness?—Yes.

7260. Do the middlemen ever bring before you cases of sickness?—Frequently.

7261. You ask him why the usual quantity of work is not brought in, I suppose?—No, not so; having connexion with middlemen who carry on business very extensively, it is impossible for us to get at it through the amount of work brought in, but we have implicit confidence in the middlemen we entrust with our machines; if we had not we should not employ them. If they say, "One of our men is ill, and we therefore have not charged him rent," we allow it at once.

7262. The middleman raises the question without inquiry on your part?—Yes.

7263. The frames being all numbered, he adverts to such a frame, and says the party working it has been sick, and then, you being satisfied with his statement, make the allowance at once?—Yes.

7264. So that under those circumstances there is no grievance or cause of complaint?—No; I would observe that I have positive means of knowing whether such allowances as we make in cases of sickness are carried out or not; it is my practice every week to drive round to our men scattered in different parts of the three counties, Nottingham, Leicester, and Derby, and then I make positive inquiries regularly as to the system carried on in the shop; and I find invariably that no man is charged by our middlemen during sickness, nor is such a thing known as giving out part work, except at the express request of the men, when proportionate deductions are made from the charges and rent.

7265. If any improper charge has been made by middlemen, the workmen may at your visits appeal against it?—Yes. I should say I see every one of the workmen that we have once at least in every three months.

7266. So that in the mode in which you conduct your business, these parties cannot be said to be at all in the power of the middlemen?—I do not think they are in any case.

7267. You think that the workmen in your neighbourhood are in a much better position than that in which workmen are described to be who are working in Hinckley and that district?—Yes; but I judge from the evidence which has been given before this Committee, in opposition to the statements which have been made as to the maltreatment of workmen in Hinckley, that the facts which have been stated here with regard to that supposed maltreatment are not correct.

7268. *Chairman.*] You have no personal knowledge of Hinckley, have you?—I have not.

7269. Sir *H. Halford.*] Upon what ground do you form such a judgment?—From the evidence of such a man as Mr. Payne, who came here with a list of every one of his frames, 127 in number, that he maintained in different parts of Hinckley, making different kinds of work; he gave you the average earnings for a number of months, and submitted his books to you for inspection; he gave you particulars as to every one of his frames worked by men, women, old men and children, whose earnings amounted to more than 8*s.*, and judging from these facts, I think that the previous statements which were made are utterly false.

7270. You think that the distress prevailing at Hinckley has been much exaggerated?—I do.

7271. How do you account for the amount of poor rates there?—Even the question of the poor rates I think has been much exaggerated. Mr. Mead, the Scripture reader, said that the poor rates amounted to 10*s.* in the year, and that in the forthcoming year the poor rate would be 4*s.* 2*d.*, making 16*s.* 8*d.*; but Mr. Payne, who is overseer, says that they have only had for three or four years one quarter's rate to the amount of 2*s.* 6*d.*

7272. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is four rates in the year?—Yes.

7273. That comes to 10*s.*?—No; all the previous ones having been 1*s.* 3*d.* and 1*s.* 6*d.*

7274. Did

7274. Did he not say, with regard to the present state of things, that they nticipated a much higher rate?—Yes; but Mr. Payne said he did not know ow Mr. Mead could arrive at such a conclusion.

7275. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Assuming the statements which have been made as to he distressed condition of the workmen at Hinckley to be correct, how do you ccount for that state of things existing in Hinckley, and a contrary state of hings existing at Nottingham?—Taking the supposition to be a correct one, I hould say that the chief reason is the amount of competition that exists now n that district with the new and improved machinery; there is a class of nachinery which has been brought into the market recently which directly perates on that class of manufacture.

7276. And thus is pressing on the employment of the workmen?—Yes; nachinery such as Mr. Corah spoke of is, to my knowledge, reducing the cost f manufacture more than 50 per cent., and therefore every day workmen in Hinckley and the surrounding places are gradually lowering their prices to come in competition with this machinery.

7277. Does your work, as connected with improved machinery, lead you to he conclusion that any attempt on the part of the labourer to run a race f competition with new and improved machinery invariably fails?—Most certainly.

7278. So that you do not think that any legislation of the kind proposed would relieve the distress said to prevail at Hinckley, if that distress be owing, as you imagine it is, to the employment of improved machinery?—I think not; I think that the race between the two classes of machinery at present is so strong, and there is such continual fighting between them, and as the wide machinery is everywhere gaining an advantage, the thing is remedying itself to a great extent, and must in a short time supersede all this kind of machinery.

7279. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that, being acquainted with these inventions now progressing in this class of machinery, you have no idea that any aid can be afforded to the distressed condition of the workmen, by the passing of any Act of Parliament?—I am not aware that anything can be done. I would just make a statement to show how the introduction of new machinery has operated, even in our own case; we did employ a very large number of narrow frames that have unfortunately been perpetuated in the trade, but which are now becoming obsolete, in making what are called common cut-up shirts; they were made at a very low price, and the amount of wages paid to the workman was very low; but recently, within the last few years, we have obtained new and wide machinery, which has directly come in competition with these narrow frames, and to an enormous extent superseded their use; so that at the present moment we have lying in our framesmith's shop, from 50 to 100 of those narrow frames, which are worth nothing but for old iron, to go to the scrapheap.

7280. Can you give us the rate per dozen that you paid to the workmen upon these narrow frames, working shirts, and so on?—There are so many different kinds of articles made that it would be difficult to say.

7281. Give us one?—Six shillings.

7282. What did you pay for that description of work on these wide frames?—About half the price.

7283. Does that half the price formerly paid leave to the workmen a better weekly earning than the 6 *s.* does?—Considerably more than double.

7284. So that if the man receiving 6 *s.* were to reduce his wages to 3 *s.*, he still could not compete with the new machinery?—No.

7285. He must come to starvation?—It would be impossible for him to compete with it.

7286. Do you think that that is a state of things that is bearing on the neighbourhood of Hinckley?—I do; when I find it is bearing on the common shirt trade of Nottingham I am satisfied it is bearing on the common hose trade of Hinckley. I recently sent out a wide rotary frame; it was a very good frame; I sent it to a shop where we have a large number of other narrow, or what have been called, wide frames; I saw the middleman, who manages it for us, and I said I wanted a man put into this frame; he said, "What will you give the man?" I said, "A guinea a week." He said, "None of my men would

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would work at that price; I am positively paying now more in my frames, up to 26 and 27 inches wide, than that amount, to many of my best men."

7287. Is it your opinion that the practice which it has been said is adopted at Hinckley and the neighbourhood, of stinting and deducting in various ways from the earnings of the workmen, is only another mode of reducing wages, in order that they may make what you consider to be a vain attempt to compete with the new machinery?—Yes.

7288. And that this struggle is only a question of time as to who must finally give way?—Yes.

7289. Therefore you deprecate any attempt to interfere with that which must be a necessary course of events by legislative enactment?—Yes.

7290. You heard Mr. Corah's evidence, as to a recent invention in Leicester, by which steam was brought to the aid of improved machinery?—We have the same machinery ourselves; though we do not apply steam to it; but the same machinery is in Nottingham, with steam applied to it.

7291. Have you ever compared the goods it produces with the goods produced in the ordinary way?—Yes.

7292. Are they such as will supply the market?—Most certainly; they will supply the same market that the original goods were intended to supply.

7293. And from your inquiries as to the cost of production, and so on, is it your opinion that the use of that machinery will increase?—Yes; it is increasing every day.

7294. Is it also your opinion that notwithstanding, such increase may, for the moment, throw a few of the working classes out of employment, it will ultimately benefit their condition?—I certainly think so.

7295. Do you think that it will not only benefit those who are now employed on this new machinery, but that it will ultimately call into requisition the whole of the labour of your district?—Yes; if the Committee will allow me I will pursue the case pointed out by one of the other witnesses. He said that if you were to adopt a net system with the present frames, the earnings of a workman himself would so considerably increase that there would be no necessity for his wife and family to be employed in a frame; that he himself would earn as much as they all now earn. I have already shown that by reason of the competition of these wide frames that is impossible; but supposing it to be possible, I want to show that in the case of these wide frames it is much more possible. If the head of a family is placed to manage one of these wide frames, and can earn his guinea a week, he is in a better position than he is now in the narrow frames, with the assistance of his wife and family; and he has their assistance at his disposal for other purposes.

7296. Sir *H. Halford.*] In speaking of these wide frames, do we understand you to say, that they are adapted to the production of fashioned goods?—Yes.

7297. How many do they make at once?—It depends upon the width of them.

7298. They are adapted to produce goods equally good with those made on the narrow frames?—Upon the coarse gauges.

7299. But not a superior kind of goods?—I do not think they are at present. You are aware that the Hinckley manufacture is upon coarse gauges entirely.

7300. To what extent do the new machines increase the rapidity of production?—I should think that if a man was employed on a narrow frame making shirt bodies upon the sort of goods I have spoken of, he would be able to make three dozen a week.

7301. I was speaking rather with regard to hose, when I spoke of fashioned goods?—But we fashion shirt sleeves in the same way as we fashion hose.

7302. Confining yourself to hose, what is the different rate of production upon these wide frames as compared to the others?—I am not prepared to say; we are not in the hose trade at all.

7303. Your evidence merely relates to the shirt trade?—To several other branches of the trade; we have children's socks, and pantaloons and drawers, narrowing in the same way, only more elaborately than a stocking.

7304. But not hose?—Not hose; if a narrow frame made three dozen a week of shirt bodies, a wide frame, 120 inches wide, would make 25 or 30 dozen.

7305. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that all attempts on the part of workmen engaged on

n the narrow frames to compete successfully with the new machinery, by ffering their labour for less than the price now paid, must be ultimately in ain?—It is quite impossible to compete with it.

7306. They must either go to the improved machinery, or seek some other mployment?—Yes.

7307. Sir *H. Halford.*] What is the value of the wide frames of which you have poken?—I should think that a wide frame, 100 inches wide, is worth 110 *l.*

7308. So that they are not within the reach of small capitalists at all?—They re not within the reach of a man who has not 100*l.*, but they are within the each of a man who has.

7309. Is there not an inducement in the frame-rent obtainable from ordinary rames to continue them in operation, notwithstanding the superior rapidity of roduction of the wide frames?—Most certainly not.

7310. Are not the owners of these small frames induced to keep them in ork as far as they can, for the sake of the profit made by the rent of them?—f the amount of rent and charges were doubled at this moment, and the work ade from those frames were brought in competition with the work made from he wide frames, there would be no possible inducement for the manufacturer o continue to employ narrow frames, owing to the fact that he would not be ble to compete with the wide frames that are making them at a price so much ess.

7311. Why is it that they are not all extinguished?—They are gradually eing extinguished; I believe that the whole of this coarse trade is in a tran-ition state, and that in all coarse low gauges the narrow frames will be uperseded.

7312. I understand you to say that there is a very recent invention, the ffect of which will be that the narrow frames will be entirely done away with?—When you speak of it as "a very recent invention," that requires modifying; vide frames have been known and have been in use for many years; there ave been recent improvements made in them.

7313. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And one of the most recent improvements is the ntroduction of steam, is it not?—Yes; and the use of narrowing tackle, which as only very recently been applied.

7314. Sir *H. Halford.*] You think that those improvements are equally pplicable to hose, as they are to other articles?—Yes, on the coarse gauges.

7315. *Chairman.*] Mr. Corah is asked, in Question No. 3,666, "How long as this machine been employed at Nottingham?" and he says, "I should hink for 12 months or more"?—More than that; that was Mr. Corah's statement; he was connected with Leicester only; he did not know how long we had had those machines in Nottingham.

7316. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have you formed any opinion as to the probable effect of extinguishing frame-rents by Act of Parliament upon the condition of the workmen?—I do not see that it could produce any effect for the benefit of the workmen. I apprehend that it would lead to considerable confusion, which must react upon the price of goods.

7317. As there must be something equivalent to rent in the case of letting out frames, if the deduction were not made in its present form, must it not assume the form of reduction of wages?—It must; there is no help for it.

7318. If middlemen are not paid in the way they are now, must they not be paid by the difference in the price of labour?—Of course; charges must be contracted, even if there were no middlemen; they must be just as much contracted by the man who has his frame direct from the warehouse; that seems to have been overlooked; if a man comes, and brings his work in himself, he has to meet the same charges as the middleman exacts from him; if he has not to pay for standing in a middleman's shop he has to find a shop for himself, pay for winding, and seaming, and bringing in, so that the charges must be made.

7319. Is it not true that working through middlemen is a source of economy to the individual workman?—Most certainly.

7320. He can perform the services that are required cheaper than the workman can do them himself?—I know they do perform them considerably cheaper.

7321. Do you think it practicable or desirable to extinguish the class of middlemen?—I think it is utterly impossible; there has been a good deal said about the

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the charges of the middlemen; I dare say I could state in the different branches of our trade what those charges are. We have a very large sock trade, fashioned socks. I have made inquiries as to the nature and extent of the charges, and I find that the whole charges are 3 *d.* for standing if the frame is in the middleman's shop, and 3 *d.* for bringing in and taking out the work, with the trouble connected with it; in that trade no other charges are made by middlemen; of course there is seaming and winding, but those things are necessary to every single hand, and to every one who works a frame.

7322. Would not the necessary consequence of the abolition by Act of Parliament of the charges and frame-rent be that there would be two prices; one the price paid at the warehouse, and the other the price paid by the middlemen to the workmen?—Yes.

7323. Which would be a great evil?—Yes; and it would lead to great confusion. A middleman would be able to make a different bargain between himself and his workmen from that made between him and the manufacturer, which would be continually tending to a reduction of wages.

7324. You think, then, that legislation would rather do harm than good?—I am sure it would; I say that, because I believe I have a more intimate acquaintance with the men generally than almost any one else has, I go among them so much.

7325. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you give the Committee any information as to the actual return upon the investment of capital in machinery?—Yes, I have gone through the returns on our frames for the last six or seven years. I was of opinion that I should find a return of nearly 10 per cent. I went through it and found that there was not quite 4½ per cent. for that number of years; it may be bad management on our part; I cannot tell.

7326. So that the principal benefit you have derived from the investment of capital in frames has been securing good machinery and good work?—I should be very glad if there was no necessity for hosiers to have frames; if they could be in the hands of the workmen, and they would keep them in proper order, it would be considerably more to our benefit.

7327. If you could be certain of the quality and regularity of the work by the machinery being kept in proper order, you would have no objection to its being in the hands of the workmen, and then that portion of your capital which is now invested in frames you would be able to add to your other capital employed in the business?—No doubt; we should be able to extend our business considerably.

7328. Do you consider that the hosiery trade in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire has been for the last three or four years in an improving condition?—In a very highly improving condition.

7329. And that the position of the workmen is also better than it was 10 or 12 years ago?—I am not prepared to go back far, but I am satisfied in my own mind that their condition is considerably better than I have ever known it, allowing for the depressed state of trade at the present moment.

7330. Mr. *Cobbett.*] How long have you known it?—About 11 years.

7331. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You think that the present moment therefore is not very opportunely chosen for introducing legislation?—I think most decidedly it is the worst moment.

7332. *Chairman.*] Suppose the object of legislation was, not to abolish frame-rents, but only a particular mode of recovering frame-rent, do you think that they could be recovered, as ordinary debts are, without stoppage?—I do not think they could; it would lead to perpetual litigation; as it is, rents and charges are matters thoroughly understood, and when the weekly payments are made, as a matter of course the charges are deducted; a man does not feel it a deduction; he knows that the balance of his earnings, after the charges are taken off, is what he ought to receive.

7333. Sir *H. Halford.*] How would it lead to perpetual litigation?—If we were to take rents monthly, quarterly, or yearly, I regret to say that, from the general improvident habits of framework-knitters, and their great addiction to drink, it would be utterly impossible to recover our rents, and we should be continually at litigation to enforce them.

7334. Would not that litigation be occasioned by a perpetual sense of injustice on the part of the workmen?—No; I do not recognise such a thing as injustice in the

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the matter; I think that "injustice" is a word that ought never to have been brought into this inquiry, for the bargain is a perfectly free one between master and man.

7335. Do you think it impossible that any injustice may be committed?—I do not; injustice may be committed in every trade; but the hosiery trade is not more liable to the charge of injustice than any other.

7336. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have heard of the distress that exists at Hinckley?—Yes.

7337. Do you suppose it arises from the want of employment, or from the existence of the system of frame rent and charges?—That is almost a preposterous question to ask me; it arises generally from a want of demand for that kind of labour.

7338. Do you think it possible that the system of rent and charges can justly be said to be the cause of the distress which is reported to exist there?—No.

7339. Do you think it has any connexion with them?—No; I should think that it had connexion with them if, as has been stated, the rents and charges were arbitrary; but it is well known what the rent of a frame is, and when a man takes a frame he never takes it without knowing what will be the rent and charges.

7340. Do you see any remedy for the distress prevailing at Hinckley except by the people leaving the trade carried on there, and taking to some other employment?—I do not.

7341. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you concur with Mr. Biggs in thinking that it would be wise and judicious on the part of the Legislature to send 10,000 people into the workhouses?—I do not.

7342. Can you give us any information as to the average earnings of the hands in Mr. Carver's employ?—Yes; if I were to take the whole of the hands employed by us, and consider what, in round numbers, are the average earnings of every person in our employ, I should say it would be 11 *s.* a week; but I should divide them into different classes; for instance, in the case of the man to whom I applied about the wide rotary frame, he sent me the net earnings of the men in his employ, and he divided them into three classes; the first class were those who were steady and industrious men, who worked their whole time; their average earnings were above 1 *l.* a week; the second class consisted of men who worked well while they were at work, but they did not work so long as the first class; they did not work on Monday, and they did not care about working on Saturday; their average was 15 *s.*; the average amount earned by the third class, including youths, women, and old men, who did not work regularly, was 10 *s.* net; that refers to the wrought shirt and drawers trade.

7343. Do they all work at their own homes?—No; at a middleman's shop.

7344. In the country?—Yes.

7345. None of them are steam factory hands?—No; but the man has a very large shop.

7346. They have not been compelled to remove from the country districts into the town in order to make these earnings?—No; then in another branch of trade, the wrought-sock trade, I should say, from the statements I have gathered from a number of the men who have been in our warehouse regularly, that the average earnings of the best and most industrious hands is 16 *s.* a week: the second class, 12 *s.*; and the third class, including old men, women, and boys, 8 *s.*

7347. From the sums that you have given us, are there any deductions made?—No; I have given the net positive earnings of the men.

Mr. *Thomas Corah,* called in; and further Examined.

Mr. *T. Corah.*

7348. *Chairman.*] I AM informed that you wish to offer some explanation with regard to some of the evidence that has been given before the Committee?—Yes.

7349. You were examined here on the 22d and 25th of May?—Yes.

7350. On your examination on the second of those days you gave this evidence,

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which I will read to you, "Did you know a workman of the name of Jame Goodman, living in Alcander-street, Leicester, who used to work for you, and who died in the month of May 1854?—We never had a man of that name that I know of; I should have recollected the name, I think, if we had; we had a Mrs. Goodman who worked to us." "Do you remember his widow subsequently working to you, who died on the 28th of March in this year?—Yes, I recollect her; it is many years since the husband worked to us." "Had she one of your frames employed for seven weeks previous to her death?—She had; and they paid what they liked for rent; it was generally about 6 *d.* a week that they paid for rent." "Do you remember the daughter bringing home the goods three days after the death of her mother, on the 31st of March, seven weeks' rent being then due to you?—I do not recollect that." "You do not recollect the daughter bringing home the goods?—I do not." "Then if she states that she brought them to yourself, that statement would not be correct?—I cannot say; she might bring them for anything I know. I really have no knowledge of the circumstance at all; how is it likely that I should, when we have such a multitude of business to attend to?" "Do you remember at all the value of the work that was done?—I do not." "Do you remember that there were seven weeks' frame rent due?—I do not recollect anything about it." "Did you in this instance stop 7 *s.*?—I cannot tell that." "And did you give the girl 4 *s.* 4 *d.* out of 11 *s.* 4 *d.*, telling her that that was the money due to her, although she told you that her mother had been sick for seven weeks, and had only been buried then three days?—I cannot tell anything about it; I know nothing of the circumstance, so I really cannot tell any thing about it; owing to the multitude of business we have to do on a Saturday, we can scarcely pay attention to anything, but get on with the business." "*Chairman.*] You would be able to ascertain how the fact was by referring to your books, would you not?—I should." "Mr. *Ingham.*] You have stated, as I understand you, that you never, so far as you know, charged rent to a person who was sick at the time, and who had been sick for seven weeks. I suppose that if you had done so you would recollect the circumstance, would you not?—Very likely I should; but I do not recollect it; when work is brought in by our workpeople, we take it in, and in fact try to despatch them as soon as we can." Then, on the 12th of May, Mary Stevens was examined, and in the course of her evidence she made this statement: "I took in these hose and the stuff, and made up her account" (that is, her mother's account), "and he" (that is your son) "told me I must wait for my money till his father came; he was not in; and I did so; when the father came in young Mr. Corah told him that I had brought in old Mrs. Goodman's work, for she was dead and buried; and he said, 'How long?' and the son said, 'A week.' The father said, 'What rent is there?' and he said 'Seven weeks'; and I told him she never worked the week before she died, and he laid me down 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, and I picked it up and went out, and then I went back and said, 'Mr. Corah, you have not given me the right money.' And he said, 'Why not?' And I said, 'If you take the whole of the rent, I want 4 *s.* 4 *d.*' And he said, 'Do you tell Mr. Goodman that I want six ounces of stuff.'" Having read to you those passages from your own evidence, and from the evidence of Mary Stevens, will you now make such observations as occur to you to be necessary?—Yes; this occurred at half-past nine in the morning. I was at the news rooms, close by our warehouse. I had just run in to read the news from Sebastopol; when I came back this woman Stevens stood at the counter; I did not know her; I never said anything to her. I said to my son, a youth 16 years of age, "How much does this woman want?" he said, "3 *s.* 6 *d.*" According to the woman's evidence I laid down half-a-crown and one shilling: now I have evidence to prove that I never said a word to that woman, with the exception of this, "There is your money." I never saw that woman after; she never came back to me. I never had any conversatio with her whatever, so that we could make no arrangement; if it had been stated to me I should have taken the rent off at once. I will just read to the Committee a statement that I have drawn up (*producing a Paper*), and which contains as nearly as possible a true account of what occurred. "It appears from the statement of an apprentice of mine, who was in the bottom warehouse with my son when Mary Stevens brought in her mother's work, that I was at the time out, and in my absence

absence they took them in, entered them, and deducted the rent, that the young woman told them that Mrs. Goodman was dead, and she, Stevens, had worked up the yarn since." Now she states here that all the work was done by her mother, but she stated to our people in the warehouse that she did part of it herself. "And she, Stevens, had worked up the yarn since, and that when I returned I paid her the 3*s.* 6*d.* without any conversation taking place between us; I am certain that had it been named to me by the woman, according to her statement, I should at once have recollected it, but when Sir Joshua Walmsley mentioned it to me at my examination, the affair seemed so unlikely that I could not for a moment entertain it. However, upon my return home I wished one of my young men to investigate the matter, and he found it was, to a certain extent, correct. I immediately sent him down with the 7*s.*, wishing him to see the young woman (Stevens), and blame her for not explaining the matter to me on the Monday following. She was not, however, at home at the time, being, I suppose, on her way to town, as she was examined the next day (Tuesday). The sister, however, told him that she had herself blamed her for not seeing Mr. Corah upon the subject, as she was sure he would not allow of such a thing. On Tuesday last, Mr. Stallard, who is one of the strongest advocates of the net system, called upon me, and in the course of our conversation, said that the anti-frame rent party had laid several traps for me; and it is my opinion this Mary Stevens is one, for I am certain she never once mentioned the occurrence, or I should not have had the least idea of acting in such a manner. At a meeting the framework knitters held this week, it was stated, by Mr. Buckby that when Mary Stevens had left the warehouse she found she had not the right money, being paid only 3*s.* 6*d.* instead of 4*s.* 4½ *d.*, and that my son instantly told her he had stopped the 10½*d.* for six ounces of yarn. Now, this circumstance alone shows very clearly what dependence may be placed upo their veracity, for actually the stockings were only entered in our cash-book at 3*s.* per dozen" (which is altogether a mistake, they should have been 3*s.* 3*d.*), "leaving, when 7*s.* is deducted, the 3*s.* 6*d.* paid her, but I suppose the woman told them 3*s.*, and they were entered by them accordingly. Now, had the matter been mentioned to me, I should at once have detected the mistake, but the idea of Mr. Buckby saying my son told her 10 ½ *d.* had been stopped for six ounces of yarn, when nothing of the kind could have been possibly said, is a convincing proof that he has not such a regard for truth as he ought to have. Mr. Buckby also stated, that as soon as I heard the woman was gone to London to be examined I sent the 7*s.* down; this statement is as false as the previous one, as I had not the most distant conception of anything of the kind, till the Wednesday after her examination." It appears that she came back in the afternoon, about four o'clock, to state that she had not the right money; I was not there at that time; I was not in the warehouse, and she went away; she said something to our young man, that is my son, a youth of 16, that she had not the right money, and she went out and said nothing more. She never spoke a word to me in any way; Mrs. Goodman has worked to me for many years, and we have always gone on very pleasantly together; we have never had any dispute; she was never in the warehouse for more than two minutes; being an odd hand, we took her in at once; we did not keep her two minutes at any time; she was a poor creature.

7351. Mr. *Wickham.*] I think I understood you to say, when you were examined before, that on no occasion did you stop rent when a person was ill?—I should not have stopped it on this occasion, had I known the woman had been ill; but I did not know it; the circumstance was not named to me either by our warehouse people, nor by my son, nor by the woman herself. She never spoke to me; I never spoke to her, except to lay the money down; I do not know that I ever even looked at the woman.

7352. If she had said that her mother had been ill and unable to work the frame, you would have paid her more than you did?—I should have returned her 2*s.* or 3*s.*, as it might be.

7353. Mr. *Biggs.*] When you discovered subsequently that she had been sick and dead, you returned the money which you had taken unconsciously?—The 7*s.* was taken without my knowledge that she had even been sick. In the first place, the work was reckoned wrong; it should have been 3*s.* 3*d.* a dozen;

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dozen; that was the price we had always paid her, and it appears it must have been entered wrong at 3 *s.* a dozen.

7354. But the charge that the woman makes against you is to the effect that you took rent when the woman was sick and dead for two weeks?—Yes.

7355. Your defence is, that though you took 7 *s.*, you were not aware that she had been sick or was dead?—I never heard anything about it; I was not aware of it.

7356. And when you became aware of it on subsequent inquiry, you returned the money which you had taken?—I sent my young man down, and told him to pay the whole of the rent, for I always acted very generously towards the woman.

7357. Mr. *Cobbett.*] When was that?—Since I was here; this is the whole of the frame rent that I have received during a little more than two years; 106 weeks' rent was due to me according to our agreement; 74 weeks I only took from her, leaving a balance in her favour of 32 weeks, that is 16 weeks a year for a little more than two years. That was allowed her when she came in with the work; she was a poor creature, and she kept her son's house; she was not compelled to work in this frame; she kept her son's house who worked at Harris's; her brother works in my factory, and receives his 20 *s.* and 21 *s.* a week at the present moment; that is net; we always adopt the net system in the factory.

7358. Sir *H. Halford.*] To whom did you send back the money?—To Cooper, our young man.

7359. For Mrs. Goodman's son?—No, we sent it to the woman, Stevens; I did not know there was a Mr. or a Mrs. Goodman working in my factory till within the last few days.

7360. What they say is, that when you heard that Mary Stevens was come here to give evidence you sent the 7 *s.* back?—I never heard it; that is as true as that I stand here. I did not know that she was coming here at all when I sent that money; I had no idea of such a thing.

7361. *Chairman.*] In point of fact, it was subsequent to the day preceding her giving evidence here, and subsequent to the day on which this woman came up to London to give evidence, that you sent the 7 *s.*, though you were not aware of it at the time?—It was the day before she came here.

7362. Mr. *Gardner.*] The charge against you is this, and I wish to know whether you deny it or not. This is what is stated by Mrs. Stevens: "When the father" (that is yourself) "came in, young Mr. Corah told him that I had brought in old Mrs. Goodman's work, for she was dead and buried; and he said, 'How long'? and the son said, 'A week;' the father said, 'What rent is there?' and he said, 'Seven weeks;' and I told him she never worked the week before she died; and he laid me down 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, and I picked it up and went out, and then I went back and said, 'Mr. Corah, you have not given me the right money;' and he said, 'Why not?' and I said, 'If you take the whole of the rent I want 4 *s.* 4 *d.*;' and he said, 'Do you tell Mr. Goodman that I want six ounces of stuff.'" Now is that statement true or false?—False.

7363. False in what respect?—She never spoke to me.

7364. You deny that you had any conversation of the kind with her?—I had no conversation whatever with her.

7365. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Were you present when that took place?—No, I was out; I had never known the woman; I did not look at the woman at all; I saw that she stood there; I had been to the news-room; very likely there was some exciting news on that day that took my attention, and I paid no manner of attention to the woman.

7366. Mr. *Wickham.*] You did not know that it was Goodman's daughter?—I never heard the name mentioned; if I had looked at the book, I should have said, "This is a mistake;" and if she had named such a thing to me, I should really have made the deduction at once.

7367. Mr. *Gardner.*] You were examined on the 26th of May, and Mary Stevens was examined on the 12th of June; on what day was it that you made this payment of the 7 *s.*, do you recollect at all?—The day before she was examined here, and I will tell you the reason of that.

7368. *Chairman.*] That was the 11th of June?—The 11th of June.

7369. When were you first acquainted with the inaccuracy of the statement which

hich you had made to the Committee?—When Sir Joshua Walmsley named here; but we never inquired into it, I believe, until that very morning when ve looked at the book.

7370. What very morning was that?—The Monday morning; we looked ver the books, and found it was wrong. The reason why it was delayed so long vas, because after I left here on Friday night, the next day being Saturday vas a very heavy day with us, being the day before Whitsuntide; I went ut in the evening of that day about half-past five, and was away a little more han a week.

7371. How do you mean you "went out?"—I went from home to spend the Vhitsun holidays, and when I came back I had the matter inquired into; and hen I sent down the money at once; but I had no idea that the woman was oming here to be examined. I thought the thing was so very paltry that it vas not worth examining her upon it.

7372. Mr. *Cobbett.*] On finding that she had made this statement, you made nquiry, and ascertained that 7*s.* had been taken that ought not to have been aken?—When I say it ought not to have been taken, I should have condemned hem if they had not taken it; it ought to have been named to me in this way, 'Will you allow me something during the time of my mother's illness, and also luring the time she was buried?"

7373. If it had been named to you in that way, would you have let her have he rent back, or not?—I should have given it to her at once, without hesitation.

7374. According to your custom, she would have had it back?—She would.

7375. You would not have exacted it?—Certainly not.

7376. But by mistake it was taken?—Yes, by mistake. A youth of 16 years of age would say to the woman, "How many have you?" and she would very likely say, "Three dozen and a half."

7377. That would be 10*s.* 6*d.*, and the rent being 7*s.*, there would be 3*s.* 6*d.* remaining?—Yes.

7378. How old is this woman Stevens?—I cannot tell you.

7379. Is she 10 or 20?—I should say, perhaps, she may be 30, for anything I know; but I do not know that I looked at her.

7380. Is she a person who would know the custom of your trade?—She was a total stranger to Leicester; she had never been to the warehouse before; Mrs. Goodman always brought in the work.

7381. Was she a person employed in that work?—Yes, in the country.

7382. They are all aware, are they not, that in cases of sickness it is sometimes the practice not to exact the rent during the week the sickness continues?—If we are satisfied that the party is really ill.

7383. I want to know whether this woman, being a workwoman of the kind that Mrs. Goodman was, was likely to be aware that by asking you not to exact the rent of the frame during those weeks, you would not exact it?—I have no knowledge as to whether she would be aware of it or not; but I should think she would, because her mother had been in so often.

7384. Therefore is it not likely that she would mention it to the youth, who you say she was speaking to on that morning; in taking in Mrs. Goodman's work, would she not be likely to say it?—I do not think she did; she did not, so far as I know.

7385. Knowing that the rent would not, under such circumstances, be exacted, I want to know whether she is not a person who would be likely to ask you to abate the rent upon that occasion?—She ought to have done so; and if she had seen me, and had asked me to do it, it would have been done at once without hesitation. I only took 74 weeks out of 106. I wish to mention also to the Committee, that I have two or three notes here, which I intended to deliver in the last time I was here, but which I forgot to hand in; they are notes which state that I do not take rent during illness; I forgot to bring them forward when I was examined before, but I will now, with the permission of the Committee, read them. The first is dated Leicester, May 18th. "I have been in your employ 15 or 16 years; I was very ill last Christmas, and was under a doctor for seven weeks; you did not stop any rent from me during my illness, Edward Nicholson. To Mr. Corah." He is a person who is well known to the Honourable Member (Mr. Biggs). Then here is another: "This is

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is to certify, that I have worked stocking-machines to Messrs. N. Corah & Sons for the last 25 years, and have never been charged with rent for the same at any time during illness, or when not receiving work out. William White, 14, Lee-street, Leicester, 21st May 1855." This is another; it is a case in which the wife was ill: "I, Joseph Brooks, do hereby certify, that my wife was taken ill on the 5th February, and did no work till the 16th April, and Mr. Corah did not take any rent of me for the time the frame was still, Joseph Brooks. Witness my hand, J. Whittlehall." Here is another from Joseph Handford, who says, "This is to certify, that Mr. Corah never takes rent from any of my hands when they are unable to work their frames through illness. Joseph Handford's mark."

7386. Mr. *Gardner.*] You say, with respect to Mrs. Goodman, that in your previous transactions with her, you have been in the habit of charging her, on an average, only 6 *d.* a week rent?—I could not tell at that time; I knew I had made several allowances.

7387. You still adhere to the statement you made on your former examination, that if a workman is disabled, in consequence of sickness or otherwise, from working at his frame, you do not take the rent?—I do not take the rent, supposing I am satisfied that the workman has been ill. I can give you an illustration of that: there is one person who was always saying that part of his family were ill, and that they never commenced work till the Wednesday morning; we went round on the Tuesday morning, and found them all at work, though they had previously told us they did not begin till Wednesday.

7388. Whenever you are satisfied of the fact, you deduct the rent, is not that so?—Yes, and I do every Saturday make an allowance of that sort to one or another when it is named to me, but when it is not named to me how can the allowance be made? It is that circumstance that has brought me here to-day, because a statement of that kind ought not to go forth to the public. I would observe that none of my hands have been examined; I must say that I should like some of them to be examined, and I think it is but right and due to me that some of them should.

7389. I understand from you that you would like Sarah Bryan and Edward Nicholson to be called as witnesses?—Yes.

Mr. *John Heard*, called in; and further Examined.

Mr. *John Heard.*

7390. *Chairman.*] I UNDERSTAND that you wish to give in some paper, or to make some further statement to the Committee?—Yes; I wish to state that last year I bought four new frames, 32-gauge, 31 inches; I paid for each of them 31 *l.* Calculating at the full average time that each frame will go, they will require to be recruited every seven years. The cost 31 *l.*, recruiting in the seventh year 12 *l.*, in the fourteenth year 12 *l.*, and in the twenty-first year 12 *l.*, making together 67 *l.* Then there is interest of capital, 43 *l.* 8 *s.*, bringing it to 110 *l.* 8 *s.* The full rent for 28 years, deducting six months that the frame will be recruiting, will be 120 *l.* 6 *s.*, and the value of the carcase 10 *l.*, making together 130 *l.* 6 *s.*; that will give 7½ per cent. upon the value of the frame. There would be a continual expense of a few shillings a year for sinkers, &c. This goes upon the supposition that the frame will always be employed.

7391. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The total outlay, including five per cent. interest upon the cost, 31 *l.*, is 110 *l.*?—Yes.

7392. The total receipts for rent are 120 *l.*, and the value of the frame as left, or of what is called the carcase, 130 *l.*, leaving a balance of 20 *l.* profit for 28 years?—Yes; that gives about 14 *s.* 3 *d.* per annum over the five per cent.

Lunæ, 25° die Junii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Cobbett.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Wickham.

ROBERT INGHAM, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Benjamin Elliott*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *B. Elliott.*

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7393. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—At Heanor, in Derbyshire.

7394. Is the hosiery trade carried on there?—Yes.

7395. And you are acquainted with the mode of its being carried on?—Yes.

7396. Are you engaged in the trade, or what means of knowledge have you?—I am engaged as middleman to Messrs. Morley, and I have been so for the last 27 years.

7397. Is that Mr. Arthur Morley, who has been examined here as a witness?—Yes.

7398. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How many frames have you under your care?—About 60.

7399. Are they all your own?—No, 40 are Mr. Morley's.

7400. And who do the other 20 belong to?—Some of them are mine, and some of them belong to other parties.

7401. I understand you to say, you have been in connexion with the Messrs. Morley for 27 years?—Yes.

7402. Will you have the goodness to explain to the Committee the mode in which you conduct your business as between your employers, Messrs. Morley, on the one hand, and the workmen on the other?—I live 11 miles from Nottingham; I go in on Wednesday and fetch out the material, and when I receive it I take it out and deliver it to my workmen, who live at short distances from my house, varying from a mile to two miles, and I receive it again from them on the following Tuesday; and on the Thursday morning I pay them in ready money.

7403. The 60 frames, of which you have spoken, are not all in one place?—No; I have a shop on my own premises, where I have 12 or 14 frames making one sort of article.

7404. And the others are scattered about in various houses in the villages round you?—Yes, they chiefly have one or two frames.

7405. What rent do you pay to Messrs. Morley for the 40 frames you hold of them?—A shilling a week for the 16-inch frames.

7406. And that you pay them weekly?—Yes.

7407. Is that the usual charge in the trade in Nottinghamshire?—Yes, for thirties, and all above.

7408. And the charge has been the same during the whole 27 years?—Yes; it has never been altered.

7409. Mr. Morley has stated that, beyond the shilling a week rent, he himself has made no other deduction?—No, not any.

7410. Will you tell the Committee what deductions you make?—Yes; in the wrought-hose trade and the cotton trade, I have 4 *d.* a week per frame.

4711. Is that for standing?—No, for profit; for delivering out the goods, and taking them in again to the warehouse, and for superintending generally.

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7412. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is what they call the taking in charge, is it not?—Yes.

7413. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What other deductions are there?—In the silk, it varies; we have sixpence for some, and a shilling for others, according to the quality of the work.

7414. Is that per week?—Per week, per frame; that is upon the silk goods.

7415. Upon the cotton hose your charge is 4*d.*, and upon the silk 6*d.*?—It varies from sixpence to a shilling, according to the quality made.

7416. The quantity of goods manufactured is much less in the fine silk than upon the other production, is it not?—Yes.

7417. And that makes it necessary for you to charge a higher rate?—Yes; the work is more particular, the cost is greater, and more care is required.

7418. To what other deductions are the earnings of the workmen liable?—They have to do their own winding and seaming, and so on; that they do in their own families.

7419. And they, of course, pay them?—Yes; they would have to do all that if they went to the warehouse themselves, just the same as they do working through me.

7420. How is it in your own shop?—They pay 3 *d.* a week for standing; that is the rule throughout the trade.

7421. The parties in that case have no cottage of their own to find?—No.

7422. You find the cottage rent for them?—Yes, standing room for the frame.

7423. Is there any other deduction?—Not any.

7424. In winter time do the workmen find their own lights?—Yes, they find their own lights, and their own coal.

7425. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is that the case in your own factory?—Yes.

7426. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that the total amount of deduction from the men appears to be 1 *s.* 7 *d.* in the cotton branch?—Yes.

7427. A shilling for rent, 4 *d.* for taking in, and 3 *d.* for standing?—Yes, where we find them standing; but there are a very few of them in the cotton; they generally have them at home.

7428. Then when you do not find them standing, the only deduction is 1 *s.* 4 *d.* a week?—Yes.

7429. You have said that the rent has been invariably the same during 27 years, but have these charges been the same also?—Yes, they have been the same. I worked as a journeyman myself after serving an apprenticeship for seven years. I went into the trade in 1819, and I served seven years; I paid the same myself, and I now receive the same that I paid.

7430. So that, as far as your recollection carries you in connexion with the hosiery trade, neither of the charges which have been deducted in the rent have varied at all?—Never.

7431. Can you give the Committee any information as to the feeling of the men upon these two points; in the first place, as regards the rent, is that a source of grievance?—My men are very well satisfied as it is; and they say that, in their opinion, if there is any alteration, it will cause a great deal of turmoil, and they will never know the price they shall receive; whereas now they do know; and if there was any demur or difficulty about it, they would appeal to Mr. Morley; but I have never known a case on account of which they have been to Mr. Morley.

7432. Do the remarks which you have made apply to the charges as well as to the rent?—Yes, they apply to the charges as well as to the rent.

7433. Is it the fact that your men could appeal to Mr. Morley without any difficulty if you made them an increased charge?—Yes, that was the understanding when I went to Messrs. Morley first, that I should pay the workmen the warehouse price, and that if there was any demur on their part, they should go to them and be settled with.

7434. You therefore hold your present position with the Messrs. Morley upon the understanding that no unfair advantage shall be taken by you, if you should be disposed to take it, of the workmen?—Decidedly; I should be as liable to be turned away myself, if I were to do so, as the hands I employ are liable to be turned away by me.

7435. And do you believe that if you did that, the penalty which would be imposed

nposed upon you by Messrs. Morley would be your dismissal?—I am confident f it.

7436. You have spoken thus far of your own mode of conducting business; o you know anything of the practices of other middlemen in your district?—Not personally; I know that there are complaints sometimes, but they are hiefly with regard to the truck system, that is, they are complaints with regard o men who pay in truck; that seems to be the heaviest complaint that is made y the workmen in our neighbourhood.

7437. You are speaking of complaints against middlemen?—They call them agmen; they work to different warehouses, and work their own materials, and awk them about, and pay in truck; but as to middlemen, I never heard a complaint in my life of their receiving their 4 *d.* a week.

7438. That class of men who are called by you bagmen, may be described s a different class to middlemen?—Quite.

7439. If I understand you correctly, they are men who are in possession of rames, either their own or rented?—Yes.

7440. They purchase the yarn, or cotton, or silk, and go to different manuacturers and sell the goods they work up?—Yes.

7441. You say that, with regard to that class of men, complaints have arisen n the part of workmen in their employ, in consequence of their being paid artly in truck?—Yes; grievous complaints have been made with regard to hose men.

7442. Mr. *Wickham.*] Do you mean complaints with regard to their supplying provisions, eatables, and so on?—Yes, all kinds of provisions.

7443. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have any complaints been made against them on the round of their making increased deductions?—No; I do not think they practise that; they would rather lessen that than otherwise, and make it up in rofit on trucking, so that they do an injury there, I should say, to the fair and onest man.

7444. You think that as regards that class of men, the complaints which are nade are confined to the mode of conducting business by truck?—Yes.

7445. They do not arise from any exorbitant increase of these charges?—No; I never knew them charge anything exorbitant; they would sooner charge nothing if the men would trade with them.

7446. Can these men earn a subsistence best in a good state of trade, or in a bad state of trade; which is the most favourable?—The most favourable time for a bagman is a bad state of trade; at a time when men are willing to get employment where they can and how they can.

7447. At such times, if they can obtain any orders for goods from the warehouse, workmen will work to them at the prices they offer, having no other means of obtaining employment?—Just so.

7448. And that enables them to practise truck?—Yes.

7449. Can you give the Committee any information whether during the 27 years to which you have referred, the system of conducting business by middlemen has increased or diminished?—It has very much increased indeed.

7450. Can you assign any reason for that?—I believe it has a good deal originated in what are called journeymen stockingers, wandering about from place to place, working to what are called master stockingers, getting into their debt, ruining them, and breaking them up; by that means the thing has got into fewer hands, and the materials are delivered out in smaller lots.

7451. The origin of the system was the employing a master stocking-maker?—Yes.

7452. He might have two or three frames?—Yes; or six or seven.

7453. In addition to his family he sometimes engaged a journeyman, did he not?—Or two or three.

7454. And then those journeymen became unmanageable, and broke down many of the little master stockingers?—Yes, many.

7455. And the manufacturers were consequently obliged to resort to the middlemen?—Yes.

7456. The effect of which has been, has it not, to produce greater regularity in the employment of the workmen?—Yes; that has been the case.

7457. And they exercise a strict supervision over the workmen?—Yes.

7458. In some cases, I believe, the middlemen possess a little property of their own?—There may be some who do; I should think not many.

7459. But you think that the fear of losing their connexion with their

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employers operates as a check upon them with regard to the mode in which they treat their workmen?—I should not expect to be able to face my employers any more, but to have warning given me to quit at once if I did anything unjust towards the workmen. I have never had a complaint made against me, and I hope I never shall.

7460. I think you say that some portion of the frames you have mentioned are your own?—Yes.

7461. Do you see any mode by which you could conduct your business satisfactorily with reference to your workmen, supposing the stoppage of rent were prohibited by law?—I believe it would be a very complicated job; and I think that, instead of doing good to the workmen, it would do them injury; instead of doing away with bagmen, it would increase them tenfold. There are many independent frames which men now hold, and with which they would manufacture goods for themselves; I think it would give them liberty, especially in bad times, to impose upon the men to a very serious extent.

7462. In bad times the only mode they have of disposing of their goods to the warehouse is by offering them at a very low price?—Yes.

7463. And their next step must be to endeavour to make up any deficiency in the price by reducing the earnings of the men in every possible way?—Yes.

7464. And you think that that system would be increased rather than diminished if the present system of frame-rents were abolished?—I am sure it would; there are people who contemplate it now. I believe it would be better for myself if the rent system was abolished; for instead of being a middleman, I should, in that case, give the work out on my own terms, and give the lowest price I could bargain for it to be done at; whereas now they have the warehouse price, which I cannot alter.

7465. Is that warehouse price fully known to the workmen?—Yes, they know the prices paid at the different warehouses perfectly well; they have a committee now going about and investigating what every man receives.

7466. So that, as regards your district, the workmen are able to look pretty well after their own interests?—They are; and they do so.

7467. And are in a condition to enforce their just rights?—I consider they are.

7468. Complaints have been made to the Committee that great evils arise from partial work only being given out, and yet full rent deducted; have you anything to say upon that subject?—That is a thing I do not know anything of.

7469. Mr. *Biggs.*] You never practised it yourself?—No; I can safely say I never gave a dozen out when I was short of work; I should not be allowed to do so.

7470. Have you heard of any such practice being pursued in your village or district?—It has been named in many cases, but it chiefly arises from the system I have told you of before, the truck system and the bagmen; I never knew it occur in any other case.

7471. Mr. *Cheetham.*] A complaint has also been made on the part of the workmen of the deduction of full rent in cases of sickness?—I believe there have been cases of that kind; but when a man says to me that he has been sick I mention it to my master, and he invariably gives back some part of the rent, and sometimes all; I have had 10 *s.* given back to me at a time.

7472. There is no positive rule with regard to that, I suppose?—No, there is none.

7473. So that, strictly speaking, according to the contract between the parties, the master might deduct full rent even in cases of sickness?—Yes, or take what he liked.

7474. But a respectable manufacturer, you say, makes it a matter of consideration, and makes an allowance when he is satisfied that the party has really been sick?—Yes; we always give back something in such cases, and sometimes all.

7475. As regards abatements for bad work, is there anything of that kind practised with you?—I could show, by my book, that I have not had a shilling in 100 *l.* taken off.

7476. But in those cases in which you have had occasion to make a deduction on that score, has the work been palpably bad, even according to the admission of the workman himself?—Yes, decidedly.

7477. If he differed from you in opinion upon that point, could he have appealed to Messrs. Morley?—Yes, decidedly.

7478. It

7478. It has been stated that probably were legislation directed to the abolition of these bagmen, good might arise to the workmen; do you see any mode by which that end might be attained?—No; I do not see how you can interfere with men employing one another.

7479. Is it your opinion that a good trade is the only means of extinguishing that class of men?—Yes.

7480. Those men are then put out?—They are then put out altogether, and they have to behave the same as other parties, or they will not get any workmen to work for them.

7481. Mr. *Biggs.*] In your own case, have you thought what you would do, or how you would carry on your business, in the event of these frame-rents and charges being abolished by Act of Parliament?—In that case, I should make the best bargain with my employer and with the employed; of course I must see myself paid.

7482. Do you see any other mode, under such circumstances, of getting a remuneration equivalent to that derived from the rent now charged, except by reducing the wages of the workmen?—Not any; I do not see any other mode; of course I must be paid in some way or other for my trouble.

7483. Then I will ask you the same question as to charges; if you are not allowed to make your usual charges as a middleman for superintendence, how would you remunerate yourself?—I should have no means whereby to remunerate myself.

7484. Except by reducing the wages?—There is no other way.

7485. That would lead to two rates of wages, would it not?—Yes; in the silk hose department, from time immemorial, that has been the case. There has been a statement, which I could have brought here, a master's statement, and a journeyman's statement, the middleman being allowed so much for seaming, winding, and taking in; then it comes to a net wages system, except that standing and frame-rent was always charged per week.

7486. If rent and charges were abolished by Act of Parliament you must receive, in order to remunerate yourself, one price from the manufacturer, and pay another price to the journeyman?—Yes.

7487. Leaving a margin as an equivalent for rent and profit to yourself?—Yes.

7488. Would that be an improvement, do you think, upon the present state of things as regards the condition of the workmen?—It would be beneficial to me, but not to the workmen.

7489. Would it be injurious to the workmen?—Yes.

7490. Why would it be beneficial to you?—Because I should take more for charges than I do now, because I at present am not compensated for my trouble; 4 *d.* a week will not compensate me for my trouble.

7491. Then you would not advise any interference by Act of Parliament with this business?—No; I think the workmen are better off as they are, than they would be if the law were changed; I do not believe that the workmen wish anything of the sort generally; my men do not, at all events.

7492. *Chairman.*] You say the workmen generally do not wish anything of the kind; have many very numerously signed petitions been sent up from workmen, praying for a change?—I believe not; there has been a man going round with petitions; he came to me; I suppose he was allowed a farthing a name, to get all the signatures he could; he would get everybody he could to sign, whether they were in the trade or not.

7493. What makes you suppose that he got a farthing a head for signatures?—I was told so; he did not tell me himself; I believe he set many names down upon the petition that he ought not to have done.

7494. When he came to you what passed between you and him, that you can speak to?—He came to me and said he had got a petition for the parish of Heanor; I asked him who authorised him to get that petition up; he said he was hired by Mr. Briggs, of Derby; I asked him what it was for, and he said it was to take the rents off. I asked him, if he thought he could take house-rent off as well; he said he thought not; and I then told him I should not sign it.

7495. Did you see any persons sign it?—No; he brought it to me personally to sign it first; I saw him about several days in the village, but I never saw the petition after; I know that several boys working in brickyards and about coal-

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pits signed the petition, according to what I was told; the parents of those boys told me so themselves.

7496. Mr. *Mundy.*] None of Mr. Morley's men signed the petition?—No; as a general body, they are better satisfied as they are.

7497. How many frames are there in Heanor now?—I should say six or seven hundred.

7498. Are you middleman for Messrs. Morley only?—I do not work for any other parties.

7499. There are a good many others besides you in Heanor, are there not?—Yes; two or three work at different places; to the Belper houses, Brettle and Ward's, the Wilsons of Nottingham, and a few other places.

7500. Can you say whether their charges and deductions are the same as those which are made to the workmen who work to Messrs. Morley?—Yes; I went there 12 years since, and took the charges the same as they were in the parish of Heanor. I had been a resident in Alfreton the fore part of my life; it was rather different there; that was the Heanor price; I took it, and have adopted it for these 12 years, and I believe that the other parties have the same prices as I have myself.

7501. You mean the other middlemen?—Yes; I do not know of their taking anything different.

7502. How many are there besides you?—Three or four.

7503. The bagmen, you say, were in the habit of paying in truck a good deal?—I believe they do chiefly.

7504. Those other three or four you have spoken of are middlemen like yourself, not bagmen?—We call them bagmen, or middlemen; it is all one; still they act differently in some parts; some work to the warehouse, and some work for themselves. I do not think that more than one or two work direct, the same as I do.

7505. We have understood before, that bagmen and middlemen are the same description of persons; but I understand you to draw a distinction between them?—There is a distinction, but they are called sometimes by one name and sometimes by the other.

7506. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In a time of good trade they would all become middlemen, inasmuch as they would be employed direct by the warehouse?—No; they have frames of their own.

7507. Mr. *Wickham.*] Is it not the case, that a middleman, strictly speaking, works for one employer only, and takes out the material, and delivers the goods, when manufactured, back at the warehouse, whereas, a bagman works for a great number of people, and puts out work here and there?—That is the distinction.

7508. Sir *H. Halford.*] But bagmen are, generally, employers of frames, are they not?—Most of them.

7509. Making their profit partly by frame-rent, and partly by truck?—Yes.

7510. Do you not think that the circumstance of their having it in their power so secure to themselves the frame-rent, by stoppages from wages, is a great motive with them to enter into the business, the frame-rent and the truck combined yielding them a very considerable profit?—If they keep their frames in repair, as Messrs. Morley do, they will find themselves sadly mistaken when they come to reckon up, if they expect much profit from them; we have plenty of frames that do not pay their way; the material that is worked in the frames is very different from what it used to be; in the case of the spun silk, cotton, and so on, the work done by the machinery is harder than it used to be; that is owing to the hardness of the material.

7511. How do you explain that; how is it harder than it used to be?—It is a different fabric; hard cotton, and spun silk, and twist.

7512. Are the goods which are made from hard cotton as good, and as valuable as those which are made from soft cotton?—More so.

7513. But they involve greater wear and tear of the machine?—Yes.

7514. Mr. *Ingham.*] Then your answer is, that you do not think there is such a profit made upon frame-rents as to be a temptation to bagmen to go into the business?—It would not tempt them at all.

7515. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is your charge for frame-rent the same as Messrs. Morley's?—Yes.

7516. Is the value of your frames equal to his?—Yes.

7517. Do you hire any frames from other people?—A few.

7518. What sort of people?—Frame-smiths.

7519. And how do you arrange matters with them?—We give them two guineas a year.

7520. Charging a shilling to the workmen?—Yes; deducting two weeks off for holiday weeks, the charge to them is 50 *s.* a year.

7521. Does your agreement with the frame-smiths, at that price, include keeping the frames in repair?—They keep them in repair.

7522. For the two guineas a year?—Yes.

7523. So that whatever there is over and above the two guineas a year, which you pay for the frame, is clear profit to you?—If I employ it all the year round; if I do not I have to bear the loss.

7524. Has it often happened that there has been a deficiency of employment lately?—In some cases; in some departments; not in the wrought cotton stockings very much.

7525. Not in the department in which you are engaged?—No.

7526. So it has not often happened to you to give out to the workmen a less quantity of material than has been sufficient to keep them fully employed?—We do not do so; when employment is slack, we do not give out partial work for a frame, but stop it altogether.

7527. In that case the workman has no resource but to go to the parish?—There is a great deal of other employment in our neighbourhood; collieries, brick-yards, and so on; I seldom see men idle; it is close to the railways and canals, and there is every opportunity of obtaining employment.

7528. You speak of a committee at Nottingham; do you think that the existence of such a body is necessary to enable the workmen to ascertain the warehouse price?—Yes, I do.

7529. You think that in order to protect the interests of the workmen, it is necessary that there should be some organised body acting on their behalf, with a view to ascertain the warehouse price?—Yes.

7530. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I understand you to say, that before you commenced your connexion with Messrs. Morley, you had been a framework-knitter yourself?—Yes; I served seven years apprenticeship to it, and then I worked as a journeyman.

7531. And I understand you to say also, that the charges which were made for rent and other deductions were the same at that time as they are now?—Just the same.

7532. Was the subject of deductions and rent agitated among you at that time?—I never heard it mentioned in my life till very recently, either when I was an apprentice or journeyman, or since I have been a master.

7533. Are you acquainted at all with the neighbourhood of Hinckley and Leicester?—Not at all.

7534. So that if Hinckley particularly has been described as a place in which the labour of framework-knitters is redundant, that does not apply to your district?—Not at all.

7535. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of the inquiries which were made by the Commissioner in 1844?—Yes.

7536. Are you aware that he examined a vast number of witnesses in Nottinghamshire, amounting to between 200 and 300?—I cannot say the number of witnesses he examined; I am aware that he was there, and I was myself examined before him.

7537. Are you aware that as to the witnesses he examined, the greater proportion of them being workmen, they all, with hardly an exception, complained of the frame-rent?—I am not aware of it.

7538. If, however, such be the fact, it would tend to show that frame-rent is considered by the workmen as a general grievance, would it not?—I should say it would.

7539. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Was the state of trade in 1844, when that Commission sat, different from what it is now?—I am not aware that it was.

7540. You do not know that people were more out of employ then than they are now?—I should say not; I was not; and I should say they were not generally.

7541. So that you cannot account for the fact that at that time it was a subject of complaint, and is not now?—No; I can only say that I am now

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paying more for my goods than I was then; for the goods that I was then paying 7 *s.*, I am now paying 8 *s.* 6 *d.*; for the silk goods for which I was then paying 10 *s.*, I am now paying 11 *s.* 6 *d.*; the article which was then 12 *s.* 3 *d.*, is now 14 *s.* 6 *d.*; what was then 14 *s.* 6 *d.*, is now 16 *s.* 6 *d.*; and what was then 16 *s.*, is now 18 *s.*

7542. *Chairman.*] Then in your opinion the condition of the workmen is, in point of fact, better now than it was at that time?—Yes, I should say so; the prices are better.

7543. Sir *H. Halford.*] Your frames are narrow frames, are they not?—Yes, they are all narrow frames.

7544. Making one stocking at once?—Yes.

7545. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you remember the year 1842?—Not particularly.

7546. Do you not recollect that in your district there was about that period considerable depression in the trade?—I do not.

7547. Mr. *Gardner.*] You say that the opposition to the present system is comparatively recent; do you remember the circumstances under which the agitation upon this subject first commenced?—No, I do not.

7548. Do you recollect about the time when it commenced?—No.

7549. You have spoken to a time when the agitation did not exist?—I cannot say when the agitation first commenced about the frame-rents; I should say very recently; I never heard anything of it till very recently, and when Mr. Muggeridge was down there I cannot recollect anything being said about it; I know there was a good deal of agitation at the time; I remember that I was examined before him, and I know that I am now paying a better price than I was then.

7550. Have you any idea as to the class of persons with whom it originated?—It originated with a very low class of persons, who got their living out of the industry of the industrious portion of the workpeople.

7551. Were they persons concerned much with the trade themselves; were they knitters?—Yes, decidedly.

7552. But not a good class of knitters?—I think not.

7553. Mr. *Biggs.*] You mean not a respectable class?—Yes.

7554. Mr. *Gardner.*] Did you know the man who came to you about signing the petition?—I did not; and I cannot ascertain who he was; I made inquiries, with a view to find out if I could, because I thought he was doing great injustice in the neighbourhood in inducing people to sign the petition by telling them that which was not right; he told me decidedly that the price paid by the hosiers could not be reduced, even if the frame-rents came off; I asked him whether there was going to be an Act of Parliament passed to compel them to keep the prices up; he said they would certainly be no lower.

7555. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Then he represented that if legislation took place, no deduction would be made in any net system that might be adopted for frame-rent and the other deductions which are now made from the earnings of the workmen?—That was the representation that he made to me.

7556. And under such an impression every workman would, of course, naturally sign a petition asking for legislation upon the subject?—Yes, but they must know better; it could not be done in that way.

7557. Can you give the Committee any information as to the condition of the workmen at Heanor; do their children go to school?—We have a national school, and I believe it is pretty well attended. The situation I live in is between the village of Heanor and Loscoe. We have a Sunday school, which is very well attended. There are three or four schools of Dissenters and the Church of Scotland, and there are day schools also, which are pretty well attended. But, as regards the condition of the stocking-makers generally, I should say that I have been for the last 16 years inspecting the Messrs. Morley's machinery all through Derbyshire and part of Nottinghamshire, and I have observed that, within the last few years, the people look better fed and better clothed than they did at the time when I was first engaged in the trade. I was brought up to the setting-up department, and therefore I understand the machinery as well as the work.

7558. How is their condition, as compared to that of the agricultural labourers in that district?—I have looked into the matter, and found that, in the parish of Heanor, there were between 30 and 40 men between the ages of 60 and 70, and 12 or 14 between the ages of 70 and 80. I also examined the

ne returns of the parish relief, and found that but eight of that number had received any.

7559. Were those eight framework-knitters?—Yes.

7560. Out of how many?—More than 40. There were 30 between 60 and 70, and the others were between 70 and 80.

7561. What class of workmen were these?—Wrought hose.

7562. Do you mean that out of 40 people receiving parish relief eight were framework-knitters?—No; only eight out of the 40. I do not know which classes they were of.

7563. Were the others agricultural labourers, or colliers, or what?—They were all stocking-makers. I did not interfere with the others.

7564. You cannot give us the whole number of persons of every class receiving relief in Heanor?—I cannot.

7565. Mr. *Biggs.*] The able-bodied and middle-aged men are all employed, I suppose?—I did not notice that more than one or two had received parish relief.

7566. Those old men you speak of had become infirm?—Yes; there were only eight out of the 40 receiving relief.

7567. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you any young people working at the frames you employ?—Not more than four or five.

7568. They are mostly able-bodied workmen?—No; my fine class goods are worked by able-bodied men, and the coarse work is done by women and children to fill up their time, and assist their families. If I let a fine frame to a man, he applies for a coarse cotton frame for his family to work at to fill up their time, and they will assist in doing the winding and seaming, which helps to make the family comfortable.

7569. Have you heard anything of the inventions which have been at a comparatively recent period introduced in Nottingham with reference to the hosiery trade?—I have seen them.

7570. What, in your opinion, will be the ultimate result upon your branch of trade of the introduction of that new class of machinery?—There is no question that it will produce a great deal of goods; I cannot say what sort of goods; but I do not think it will much injure us in regard to the better class of goods that we manufacture.

7571. How will it be with regard to the quantity produced by it?—There is no doubt at all that it will produce a great quantity, and by and by it may perhaps produce something better than it does now.

7572. If, therefore, in the hosiery trade there be a number of people engaged in the manufacture of the inferior description of goods to which you refer, they must necessarily come into competition with these new inventions?—Yes.

7573. And which do you think will give way in that struggle for rivalry?—I cannot speak to that; the thing was in agitation many years ago; but it has not progressed a great deal in our neighbourhood. We stand about the same as we did when I went with respect to machinery, and with respect to the quality of goods.

7574. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do I understand you to say that the finer quality of goods can only be made one at once upon the single frames?—Yes; not good articles.

7575. Mr. *Gardner.*] Who is the Mr. Briggs to whom you alluded just now?—I think he is a lawyer.

7576. What part does he take in this matter?—He had employed the person who came round with the petition; that is all I know about it.

7577. Is he professionally employed by any association?—I cannot speak to that.

7578. Has he any connexion with the trade in any way?—Not that I am aware of.

7579. Are you aware that a considerable number of petitions have been sent up from Leicestershire with reference to this matter, and that there is very much dissatisfaction felt by a large portion of the working people with regard to the present system?—I have been told that there is.

7580. *Chairman.*] You have not been in Leicester?—I have not been there in the way of trade.

7581. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have you any means of accounting for that dissatisfaction?—Unless it is that the improved machinery comes into competition with them.

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them. I did not formerly use to hear such accounts from Leicester as we hear now.

7582. You are aware that wages are very low there?—According to the account that has been given here they are.

7583. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have no knowledge of your own with regard to Leicestershire?—Not at all.

7584. Mr. *Gardner.*] You would not attribute that lowness of wages to the system of paying wages that is pursued there, because the same system is pursued in Nottinghamshire, where wages are higher?—Yes.

7585. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are there a considerable number of miners and colliers in your district?—Yes.

7586. Do you know at all what their earnings are?—Some of their earnings are very large, and some are very small.

7587. Is their actual condition much superior to that of the framework-knitters?—I am quite sure it is not.

7588. Mr. *Mundy.*] Their average wages are higher, are they not?—Yes; but the wear and tear and the cost of provisions is greater. Men cannot work as colliers on the same quantity of provisions that men can who work in a stocking-frame.

7589. They require more sustenance?—Yes, and more clothes; the wear and tear of them is a great deal more.

7590. Sir *H. Halford.*] Should not the effect of there being abundant employment in other occupations be to keep up wages of the framework-knitters, and to improve their condition generally?—I cannot see that it would make any difference.

7591. But framework-knitters, you say, have a resource; they may in flat times obtain other employment?—I have known it to be the case when the stocking-making trade has been bad, that we could not get a labourer to do a day's work when we wanted him.

7592. Why not?—Because they had plenty of good employment in other places.

7593. Mr. *Biggs.*] You were asked just now if you could tell us the difference between the average wages of a framework-knitter and an agricultural labourer, and I think you did not answer the question?—I have about 60; 20 of those men can earn 1 *l.* a week; I must put them in classes; I should say that another 20 would not earn more than 12 *s.* Both those two classes are chiefly able-bodied men; the third class are women and children, and they do not earn more than 7 *s.* or 8 *s.*; say 7 *s.*

7594. *Chairman.*] Is that what they earn net?—Yes.

7595. Mr. *Biggs.*] Those who earn only 7 *s.* or 8 *s.* are only employed part of their time, I suppose?—Yes; they work to help to make out in the family.

7596. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it not the case that, generally speaking, in Nottinghamshire there is abundance of employment, and consequently that the condition of the people is favourable?—In Derbyshire.

7597. There being abundance of employment in your part of the country, the consequence is that the people are in a favourable condition?—Generally speaking, they are.

7598. Mr. *Cheetham.*] In your statement as regards the earnings of your own men, you divide them into three classes, earning respectively 20 *s.*, 12 *s.*, and 7 *s.* a week?—Yes.

7599. The average would be about 13 *s.*?—Yes.

7600. Does the receipt of that earning place them in a better position than the agricultural labourer?—Decidedly.

7601. Mr. *Biggs.*] An able-bodied adult you say gets 20 *s.*; what would an able-bodied agricultural labourer get?—I think they vary from 2 *s.* 2 *d.* to 2 *s.* 6 *d.* a day, according to their ability; I believe that is what is given under the Butterley Company, and in different coal fields about.

7602. *Chairman.*] Do you say that the same description of workmen that would make 20 *s.* a week in the hosiery trade, would get 15 *s.* a week as an agricultural labourer?—I should say he would.

7603. Mr. *Wickham.*] Or as a miner?—No; a miner gets more money.

7603.* *Chairman.*] But it is necessary, you say, that he should expend more money on provisions?—Yes; 15 *s.* of a stocking-maker's money is worth more than 1 *l.* of a miner's at any time.

7604. You say that your charge of 4 *d.* is the thing that is most grumbled at by the knitters?—No, I never heard it grumbled at; the truck system is the greatest grievance they have to contend with.

7605. Then you have not heard any complaint as to your charge of 4 *d.*?—No.

7606. You say you receive that to remunerate you for your trouble in going to the warehouse, bringing out material, and distributing it to the various shops, and taking the wrought goods back?—Yes.

7607. You told us you were formerly connected with the trade in Alfreton?—I was apprenticed there.

7608. Can you give the Committee any information as to the state of trade at present there?—No; I ceased 12 years ago to have connexion with it.

7609. At what age do children generally go to work in the frames?—At different ages; I went when I was nine years old.

7610. How old are those who are in your employ at present?—I should say about 11 or 12 years of age; but it is according to their size and other circumstances. I was left an orphan, and was obliged to work.

7611. You say you have plenty of schools in your neighbourhood?—Plenty.

7612. But these children cannot go to school, can they?—Some of them do; they do not always go in the week; they always attend the Sunday schools; there are a great number of Sunday schools.

7613. But they cannot go to school on the week-days if they are employed in the frame?—Of course they do not if they are employed in the frame.

7614. Are there a greater proportion of stocking-makers' or of other classes of persons' children who go to the schools?—I should say there are more children of stocking-makers, in consequence of there being more stocking-makers there, than any other class of persons.

7615. But in proportion?—Yes.

7616. More than the children of colliers, for instance?—Yes; for the colliers are a class of persons who never care whether their children go to school or not; they say, "I never went to school myself, and I get through, and my children must do the same as I do;" that is all they will say, unless they blackguard you; I have remonstrated with many of them, because they could have sent their children to school free; there is a gentleman in the neighbourhood who would have paid for the children going to school, but they would not send them.

7617. Does the same feeling exist among stocking-makers?—No; not to the same extent.

7618. They are generally better educated?—Yes; they send their children a good deal to the Sunday schools.

7619. Is their attendance at school confined to the Sundays?—No; there are some who go to school regularly.

7620. The parents of the children teach them to go into the frame at an early age?—They wind and seam at an early age; it is a light job, and they can go to that sooner than they can to anything else.

7621. Mr. *Gardner.*] With respect to these children who, you say, go into the frames at the ages of 10 or 11, have you ever seen them write, or heard them read?—Yes.

7622. What is the amount of their powers?—That I cannot say; since I have been in the trade very few of them have been put into frames; I am employing 60, and I have not more than four or five who are now learning.

7623. Do you mean that the proportion of children who go into the frames is very small?—Very small indeed; there are but a few put into the frame at present.

7624. *Chairman.*] They are going off to other employments?—Yes.

7625. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you take that as a sign of their improved condition?—I should say it was.

7626. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of any firm in Derbyshire that works on a different plan without the intervention of middlemen?—No.

7627. Are you aware how Messrs. Ward, of Belper, carry on their business?—They carry it on on the same principle as I do; I have been speaking about them as persons who carry on their business, and in the same way as I do.

7628. By means of middlemen?—And bagmen: chiefly bagmen.

7629. What is the difference between a bagman and a middleman?—They will

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will allow a bagman to work to as many warehouses as he likes, and make his own material up himself.

7630. In the case of a middleman, he is in direct connexion with a particular manufacturer?—Yes.

7631. You would not consider yourself at liberty to take work out from any other manufacturer?—I have no material but Messrs. Morley's, and I have to keep an account of it, and to deliver the same quantity back again.

7632. Mr. *Wickham.*] I understand the result of what you have said is, that you think any legislative interference with these men would be very prejudicial to them?—I think it would; I am quite of that opinion.

William Emmerson, called in; and Examined.

W. Emmerson.

7633. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—At Arnold, near Nottingham.

7634. Are you a hosier there?—No, a workman.

7635. A workman in what species of work?—Wrought cotton hose; 16 inch; the narrow frames.

7636. Who do you work for?—My mistress works for Mr. Morley; not direct, but through the bagman.

7637. What is the name of the bagman?—Mr. Askew.

7638. Your wife works to Mr. Askew?—Yes.

7639. Who do you work for?—I work for myself.

7640. Sir *H. Halford.*] Have you a frame of your own?—Yes; I purchased it 18 months ago.

7641. How do you dispose of the goods that are produced by that frame?—I sell them sometimes; sometimes I get work from the different bagmen.

7642. Do you sell the goods that are produced by your frame on your own account?—Sometimes.

7643. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you find that that answers your purpose, better than working for a middleman?—Yes.

7644. Sir *H. Halford.*] You purchase the cotton at the warehouse, and make the goods on your own account?—I do not purchase them at the warehouse; there is a cotton warehouse in Nottingham, where you can buy bundles of cotton to make up on your own account if the frame is your own.

7645. You purchased your own frame 18 months ago?—Yes.

7646. How much did you give for it?—£. 2. 14 *s.*

7647. I suppose it was an old frame?—Yes, it had been jobbed up when I bought it.

7648. Mr. *Wickham.*] How many inches wide was it?—Sixteen inches wide.

7649. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you make the finer quality of goods upon that frame?—No, it is about the middle gauge.

7650. Have you had any repairs done to it since you have had it?—No.

7651. So that the whole cost of it has been 2 *l.* 14 *s.*?—Yes.

7652. And how long do you expect it will last?—Two more years without any repairs.

7653. And then it will be good for nothing, I suppose?—It will be good for nothing by that time; it will not be worth laying out more money upon it.

7654. What do you think is the ordinary purchasing price of frames?—It depends upon the quality of the frames; perhaps you mean the wrought-hose frames, 16-inch wrought frames.

7655. The same as yours; the same gauge?—The price of a frame differs according to the value of the machine, and the condition it is in.

7656. What sort of a frame does your wife work upon?—A good frame.

7657. What is the value of it?—I dare say it would be worth 7 *l.*, as frames are going now; I do not believe it would sell for any more.

7658. To whom does that frame belong?—The bagman.

7659. And what rent does your wife pay for it?—A shilling rent; it is a 30-gauge frame, and the charge of the bagman in our neighbourhood is 1 *s.*; Mr. Morley's bagman I mean; and with the manufacturer the same, and other bagmen.

7660. When you say "bagman," do you mean a middleman working on Mr. Morley's account entirely?—I know no difference between a bagman and a middleman.

7661. Suppose you call him a bagman; he is employed on Mr. Morley's account, is he not?—Yes, he is employed by Mr. Morley.

7662. And

7662. And your wife pays to that person 1 *s.* a week for the frame on which she works, I understand?—Yes, 1 *s.* for the frame.

7663. And something besides for what is called taking in?—Yes, 3 *d.* a week.

7664. Is that paid whether she makes little or much?—That is the regular charge of the bagman, 15 *d.* a week; 1 *s.* rent, and 3 *d.* for taking in.

7665. Whatever the quantity of goods is; it is not so much a dozen, but so much per week?—It is not by the dozen.

7666. Mr. *Biggs.*] Are there any further charges?—No, the frame is in my own house.

7667. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is full rent commonly paid when full work is not given?—It is with other bagmen, but Mr. Morley will not allow it, I believe, with his bagmen; he is more honourable.

7668. To your knowledge there are others who do it?—Yes, there are others who do; my wife has paid it to Mr. Morley's bagman.

7669. I understood you to say that she worked to Mr. Morley?—Yes, but she works to Mr. Morley through this bagman.

7670. The frame being the property of the bagman?—Yes.

7971. And the bagman, whether he gives full employment or not, exacts the full rent?—Not always; he has done it, but not always.

7672. *Chairman.*] Has your wife ever complained to Mr. Morley about it?—No, I believe Mr. Morley will not allow his bagman to work to anybody else besides himself.

7673. Sir *H. Halford.*] But that does not appear to be the case with regard to the person you have spoken of?—No.

7674. Then what he does is without the knowledge of Mr. Morley?—How do you mean?

7675. I understood you to say that Mr. Morley will not allow any middleman in his employ to work for anybody else?—He will not.

7676. But this person, you say, is employed by Mr. Morley, and does work for other people?—No, this frame that my mistress works in is the bagman's frame, but working to Mr. Morley through the bagman.

7677. I do not see how that is to be reconciled with what you say, that Mr. Morley will not allow that to be done?—He will not allow his bagmen to work to any other hosier.

7678. How is it that that is not the case with regard to the particular bagman to whom you have referred?—He works his frames to Mr. Morley; he has a certain portion of Mr. Morley's frames, and a great number of his own frames.

7679. He works his own frames to whom he likes?—No; he works them all to Mr. Morley.

7680. *Chairman.*] If Mr. Morley knew of it, he would not allow him to give partial work and take full rent for a frame?—No.

7681. Mr. *Wickham.*] You never made any complaint to Mr. Morley on the subject, did you?—No. There were complaints made to Mr. Morley, some time ago, as to taking in; the bagmen charged 6 *d.* for taking in on certain frames; and in 1849 there was a general strike among the framework knitters on the wrought cotton hose in the three counties; they struck against the charges; and then the bagmen in our neighbourhood reduced their charge from 6 *d.* to 4 *d.*, in consequence of the workmen refusing to pay the 6 *d.*

7682. Sir *H. Halford.*] There being a general complaint that 6 *d.* was too much for taking in?—Yes.

7683. And the charge was reduced?—It was reduced by Mr. Morley's wish.

7684. *Chairman.*] That was by agreement and combination among the workmen?—A deputation of the workmen waited on Mr. Morley during the strike, and he received them very courteously and respectfully several times, and asked what were their grievances, and they told him; and when they resumed work, after the strike, the 6 *d.* charge for taking in was reduced down to 4 *d.*

7685. Was the charge of 6 *d.* made for cotton goods or for silk goods?—Ours is wrought cotton work.

7686. Mr. *Mundy.*] You speak entirely of wrought cotton?—Yes; I know nothing of the silk work; we have not any in our neighbourhood.

7687. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there many independent frames in your neighbourhood that do not belong to the manufacturers?—Yes, a great many.

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7688. Who do they commonly belong to?—They belong to the bagmen, the bagmen's sons, framesmiths, and various other parties.

7689. In the cases in which frames belong to framesmiths, are they let directly by the framesmiths to the workmen in many instances?—They are in some cases. If a workman can go and get employment for a frame, there are framesmiths in the neighbourhood I come from where he could get one.

7690. Do you mean to say that a workman can always go to a framesmith and get a frame?—Yes; especially when trade is bad, as it is now, he can, because the manufacturers cannot employ them.

7691. Do the bagmen sometimes hire frames?—Yes, when trade is good.

7692. And do you know the price they pay to the framesmiths for them?—I believe that in some cases they pay about 8*d.* or 9*d.* a week for a 16-inch frame; of course, they let them out to the hands at 1*s.* a week; they let none of them out at less than 1*s.* a week, I believe; I am speaking of 30-gauge frames and upwards.

7693. I suppose that if a workman hires a frame of the framesmith, he is not so sure of getting employed, is he?—Not in flat times.

7694. Do you think that the present system is a necessary one, and that the middleman should be paid by the workmen instead of by the manufacturer?—The manufacturer, I believe, ought to pay the bagman.

7695. You think it would be a better system if he were paid by the manufacturer instead of by the workmen?—Yes, I do.

7696. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that, if that were so, you would get the same wages as you get now?—It would make no difference, I think, in the wages, because if Mr. Morley wishes to employ a middleman or a bagman, he employs him for his own benefit. I do not believe it is for the benefit of the workmen at all to have a bagman; why should we complain of them if they were a benefit to us?

7697. Sir *H. Halford.*] You think that the bagman's office is to transact the business of the manufacturer?—Yes; and the workman pays him for transacting that business.

7698. Are you aware of any manufacturers who carry on their business without bagmen?—Yes.

7699. Can you speak positively to that fact?—I believe I can speak possitively to it.

7700. What firm can you refer to?—I believe the Messrs. Brettels, of Belper, do not employ any bagmen; Mr. Allen, of Nottingham, does not employ any bagmen, I believe, in the wrought cotton hose.

7701. All those who work to them work direct to the warehouse?—Yes.

7702. And how do the manufacturers manage the superintendence; I presume that a large number of people coming to the warehouse, and the business being all direct to the warehouse, must create a great deal of labour there?—I have heard no complaints of the firm of Brettels, and it is one of the largest firms in the three counties; in fact, if they had felt that it would be beneficial to employ bagmen they would have them, but they do not employ any.

7703. The business usually done by bagmen in the case of other manufacturers is transacted in their case by agents of their own?—Yes; in all their warehouses.

7704. And you infer from that that bagmen are not absolutely necessary in order to the conduct of the trade?—Not at all.

7705. You think they might rather be considered as the agents of the manufacturers by whom they should be paid?—Yes.

7706. *Chairman.*] Who supply the spinners who work direct to Mr. Brettel, with raw material?—Mr. Brettel's man, in his own warehouse, at Belper.

7707. Do the men go to his warehouse?—Yes; they go to the warehouse.

7708. Mr. *Biggs.*] Are the Committee to understand that so large a firm as Messrs. Brettels employ none but individual workmen?—I believe they do not in the wrought cotton work.

7709. Do you mean they do not employ shops?—Yes, shops of four or five frames; that is not a bagman.

7710. Is not a man who superintends four or five frames to all intents and purposes a middleman as much as the man who employs 50?—No, the workmen do not so consider it in our neighbourhood.

7711. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Upon what authority do you say that Messrs. Brettel & Co.

& Co. employ no bagmen?—Because I have been on trades' business, and made it my business to inquire into it, in Derbyshire.

7712. How long ago is that?—In 1849 and 1850; I have heard the secretary for the trades say that they have not any bagmen.

7713. Do you know Bonsor, in Derbyshire?—I believe there is no wrought cotton hose made there.

7714. Have Messrs. Brettels any workmen there?—I believe not in the wrought hose.

7715. Do you know whether they have any workmen there at all?—Do you mean whether they have any workmen there at all in the shirts?

7716. Do you know whether they employ any middleman in that place?—No, I do not.

7717. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you acquainted generally with the sentiments of the workmen with respect to frame rents?—In my own neighbourhood I am.

7718. Do they consider that they are prejudicial to their interest?—Yes.

7719. Are you prepared to say that that is the general opinion of the workmen?—Yes, in the place I come from, and in other villages in the neighbourhood, it is the case.

7720. Are you aware of the petition that was presented to Parliament upon the subject?—How long back?

7721. I will say the last; a petition that was presented a few months ago?—No; we have had no petition come to our place.

7722. You did not sign a petition during this Session of Parliament?—No; there was not one that came to our town, I believe.

7723. If there had been one presented there, do you think it would have obtained numerous signatures?—I have not the least doubt that a great many framework knitters would have signed a petition for the abolition of frame rents.

7724. What do you think would be the effect generally upon the trade if frame rents were abolished by Act of Parliament?—I think the workmen would have nothing to fear from it.

7725. *Chairman.*] Would they be benefited by it, do you think; and if so, in what way?—They would be benefited in this way, they would not have the charges and frame rent to pay.

7726. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that in that case they would obtain the same wages?—That cannot be decided.

7727. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why not?—We cannot depend on our present prices even at this time; we are at the mercy of the manufacturers, who may reduce our wages now if they think proper, and they could do so then.

7728. Do you think that a manufacturer would let you have a frame for nothing, any more than another man would let you have a house for nothing; would he not get rent in some shape or form?—I cannot answer that question.

7729. If a middleman employs a journeyman, that middleman must be paid for his services; they are useful services rendered by him to the journeyman, are they not?—I do not see that a middleman is any benefit to the workmen.

7730. Does he not fetch out the material from the warehouse, take in the work when done, and superintend in the meantime?—Yes.

7731. That is a useful service rendered by the middleman, and one for which he must be paid, is it not?—Yes, but the workmen would gladly do it for themselves, and have nothing to pay for it.

7732. But if a workman had to occupy his time by going five miles from the place where he lived to the warehouse on Monday, and five miles again on Saturday, and if he had to attend to his own seaming, and so on, would he not be worse off than he is when he pays a middleman to perform those offices for him?—In a brisk time the men take in their work on Saturday, and take work out on Saturday; there are different days for going in; when they take their work in, they bring cotton out the same day, and in that case they have not to go in twice.

7733. I understand from the evidence of one of the witnesses, that the charges made by middlemen are only 4 *d.* a week for taking in?—That is the fact.

7734. Suppose a man occupies the whole, or half, of Saturday by going in, does he not waste in time more than 4 *d.*, and is it not, therefore, a loss to him if he works direct to the warehouse, and a gain to him if he works through a middleman?—Yes.

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7735. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does he not lose the whole of Saturday when he takes his work in?—No, not always; but if a man, who has six frames, and who you call a middleman, though I do not call him a middleman, takes in work on a Saturday, he saves 2*s.* by going to Nottingham himself, instead of taking in through a middleman.

7736. How do you make that out?—He has not to pay the bagman.

7737. Do you think that the time he is occupied in travelling five or half a dozen miles is worth nothing?—Yes; but he would have the privilege of laying his own money out at Nottingham; if he worked to a bagman, he would very often have to lose a day, or half a day, because the bagman had not other cotton to give him, until he went into the warehouse for a fresh supply.

7738. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Do you ever send your goods in by a carrier?—When men work to a bagman, he sends the goods in as he thinks proper, sometimes through a carrier, but chiefly by the omnibus.

7739. Could you send your work by a carrier conveniently?—There are parties who do it.

7740. In that case, could you dispense with the services of the middleman?—Certainly we could.

7741. Could you not send your goods in to Mr. Morley's warehouse by carrier and receive the material back from him in the same way?—If you were to test the opinions of individuals in our district upon the question whether they would prefer working direct to the warehouse, or through bagmen, you would find that they would unanimously prefer working to the warehouse direct.

7742. You are speaking now of your own class?—Yes, the wrought hose.

7743. Where do you yourself live; in Nottingham?—In Arnold.

7744. But suppose a man of your class to be living five or six miles out of town, would he like to have the opportunity of sending by carrier the goods he had made to the warehouse?—Yes.

7745. And there would be the means also of sending you material back from the warehouse by carrier?—Yes, that is often done.

7746. Do you know persons who do that?—It has been done to Mr. Morley.

7747. You cannot name a person who does it, can you?—No, but it has been done many times.

7748. *Chairman.*] What is the bulk of what you turn out from a frame in the course of a week; how much would it weigh?—That depends upon the quality of the goods, if you take one frame of the middle gauge; a dozen hose would weigh two pounds four or five or six ounces.

7749. Then you would find no difficulty in taking in the produce of six frames?—No.

7750. Mr. *Mundy.*] In that case, only one man out of six would lose half the Saturday?—That is all.

7751. Mr. *Cobbett.*] What is the use of a middleman, except to bring out the unwrought material to you and to take back the manufactured goods?—I do not know that he is of any.

7752. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Why, then, do the workmen continue to work under him?—Because they cannot get employment elsewhere; that is the reason.

7753. Mr. *Gardner.*] You describe yourself as a knitter; do you work for yourself?—I do now.

7754. Have you any other occupation?—Yes.

7755. What is it?—I keep a little bit of a shop at home in a small way.

7756. You do not work regularly as a knitter?—I have done so for years, and was brought up to it.

7757. I am asking what you do now?—I make sometimes half a dozen pairs a week, and sometimes eight pairs a week, and so on.

7758. How many hours does that take you in the course of the week?—I could make my dozen very comfortably in a week if I worked my 12 hours a day; that is a good, fair week's work for any man.

7759. How many hours a day do you work now?—I do not work that now, because I do not need the work.

7760. How many days a week are you in the frame?—Sometimes two and sometimes three.

7761. And how many hours in each day on an average?—On an average I should say eight hours a day.

7762. Will you explain to the Committee how you carry on your business, working your own frame?—I buy my stuff, and sell the work I do.

7763. From whom do you buy your stuff?—I buy it at different places, wherever I can purchase it; sometimes at the cotton warehouses.

7764. Have you bought any quantity at a time?—I have bought a ten-pound bundle at a time.

7765. What does that cost?—Fourteen shillings and sixpence, I think.

7766. Did you pay cash for it?—Yes.

7767. How long does that employ you?—That would make four dozen of hose, or rather better than four dozen.

7768. Mr. *Biggs.*] At the rate you describe yourself as working, how long would that employ you?—It would take me six or eight weeks to make it.

7769. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you do with these hose when you have made them?—I sell them.

7770. To whom?—To any party that wants to purchase. I will sell half a dozen to any individual.

7771. Do you dispose of them to private individuals, or to persons engaged in the trade?—To private individuals.

7772. *Chairman.*] Are they some of the articles you keep in your shop?—Sometimes.

7773. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is the nature of your shop?—It is a confectionery business, and a few stockings when I have sale for them.

7774. You say that sometimes this system is good for you, and sometimes it is bad?—Yes.

7775. Explain how that is; I mean working for yourself. I asked you some time ago whether you thought that plan of working answered your purpose?—Yes; it does answer my purpose when I can sell the articles I make, because I have not frame rents and charges to pay, the frame being my own.

7776. Do you find any difficulty in selling the articles you make?—Yes, just now, trade being very bad. Sometimes I get a dozen of hose to work to a different bagman. Sometimes I get a few gores to work for shirts, and so on.

7777. How long have you been acting on this system of working for yourself?—Eighteen months.

7778. Did you find that you made a good profit at any time?—No; I could not make a good profit out of one frame, for I do not devote the whole of my time to it; and I have found a great deal of difficulty sometimes in getting shut of my goods.

7779. Is it a system which you think you shall continue?—No.

7780. In fact, your dependence is mainly upon your shop rather than on your occupation as a knitter?—No; it is a petty little shop.

7781. If you had no occupation but that of a knitter should you have worked yourself as you do now?—If trade was brisk, and I could get work for my frame, which I cannot now, I would give up my other business.

7782. You would not do it now if you had not a shop to fall back upon?—I would.

7783. You told me just now that you would not do it when trade is bad?—I cannot when trade is bad, because I cannot get employment; but I would when trade is brisk; just now there are many independent frames standing still, and even warehouse frames.

7784. Are there not thousands of workmen who are employed equally through bad times and good times by the large houses in Nottingham?—Yes; I believe that Mr. Morley endeavours to keep his hands employed as well as he can, and Mr. Wilson; but other manufacturers will not do so. There are many of Mr Heard's frames standing still at the present time; some of Mr. Allen's frames are standing still, and others too, because trade is bad with them as it is with the workmen.

7785. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you connected with any trades committee?—Not now.

7786. Have you ever been?—Yes.

7787. You told us that if a petition for the abolition of frame rents had been brought in to your village every knitter would have signed it?—No; I believe that a great majority would.

7788. And you explained that by the abolition of frame rents they would understand

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understand that they should not have to pay frame rent at all in any form?—That is my view, and their view of it.

7789. What is the average rent that is paid for a frame in your neighbourhood?—The average rent would be about 1*s.* a week. There are very many frames of 30 gauge and upwards; they all pay 1*s.*; under that I believe they pay 9*d.* or 10*d.*

7790. Those persons who you say would sign a petition for abolishing by Act of Parliament the charge of 1*s.* for frame rent suppose that the effect of that abolition would be to increase their earnings by the amount of 1*s.*?—Yes.

7791. Mr. *Biggs.*] That is their impression?—Yes.

7792. *Chairman.*] And so with regard also to the charge of 3*d.* which you have mentioned?—Yes.

7793. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How long have you ceased to be a committee-man?—I have had nothing to do with trade matters since 1849, or the early part of 1850.

7794. And how long were you on the committee previous to that?—I had been engaged in trade matters previous to that for three or four years at different times.

7795. Were you engaged in that capacity when the Commissioner, Mr. Muggeridge, came into that district?—Yes.

7796. Did you give any evidence before him?—My father did.

7797. Have you, as a committee-man, any knowledge of the Hinckley district at all?—I have been in the Hinckley district.

7798. What is the condition of that district as regards the workmen, as compared to Nottingham?—I believe that in the south of Leicestershire they are more oppressed by charges and frame rents than we are in our part of the country; I believe that to be the case.

7799. Do you know what the earnings of the workmen there are, as compared with their earnings in Nottinghamshire?—I believe they are less.

7800. To what do you ascribe that?—I believe it is to be ascribed to the work being coarser; it is a different article that is produced; a coarser kind of article.

7801. Are they as well employed at all seasons of the year as they are in Nottinghamshire?—Sometimes they are employed when trade with us is flat; I believe that, upon the whole, they are as well employed as we are in Nottinghamshire.

7802. Then you do not agree with the statements which have been made to the Committee, that there is a considerable want of employment almost continuously and regularly at Hinckley?—I did not know of any complaints of that description being made; I know that at times when they have been flat we have been sometimes brisk, and when we have been brisk they have been sometimes very flat; I have been in the Hinckley district on deputations on trade matters some four or five years ago, but since that period I have not had anything at all to do with the trades.

7803. Is it your opinion that the difference between the two districts is owing to the rent and charges being higher in Hinckley than they are in Nottinghamshire?—Yes; I should say that would make the condition of the people much worse, because the charges are higher, and the rents too, than they are in our part of the country.

7804. Do you think there is any other cause than that to account for the difference in their condition; I do not know that there is; there may be.

7805. You were speaking about Messrs. Brettel carrying on their business without the aid of middlemen; do you know Jonathan Elliott, of Alfreton?—I know there is such a man.

7806. Do you know that he is a middleman?—He is not in the wrought cotton hose work, I believe; he is in the silk work.

7807. Is not he a middleman?—I do not believe he employs any but those that are in his own shop.

7808. Does he work for Messrs. Brettel?—I do not know who he works for now.

7809. You do not know whether he does or not?—I do not; he did in 1849, when I was down there.

7810. Then

7810. Then your evidence to-day is limited to the period of 1849?—No; I know Mr. Elliott personally.

7811. But you have given a statement as to a large employer of labour in Derbyshire, who, you say, is carrying on business without the aid of a middleman?—A bagman.

7812. Have you not stated that a bagman and a middleman is the same?—Yes; I do not call a man a middleman who has a shop with only half-a-dozen frames in it.

7813. What do you consider him?—A workman.

7814. Are you prepared to say that Messrs. Brettel have not a considerable number of that class of workmen?—I believe they have, and Mr. Morley has.

7815. What you wish the Committee to understand is, that the Messrs. Brettel do employ men who come to the warehouse, representing five or six frames?—Yes, I believe that to be so.

7816. But you object to styling those persons middlemen?—Yes.

7817. Do you know Alfred Ogden?—I do not.

7818. You do not know whether he works for Messrs. Brettel?—No, I do not know him.

7819. Mr. *Cobbett.*] What is the difference between those men who are employed by Messrs. Brettel, and of whom you have just spoken, and bagmen?—I am speaking of a person who works five or six frames in his own shop, and in his own family; he pays no charges, and he does not charge his family with taking in.

7820. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What do you call that class of persons?—Workmen.

7821. Is there not a class of men who, in addition to his own family, will employ three or four journeymen?—Yes.

7822. What do you call that class of men?—I call them workmen.

7823. Do not the journeymen pay rent to him?—They must live with him and lodge with him, and he pays them journeymen's charges.

7824. Whose are the frames that the journeyman works; do they not belong to this party?—Yes, but he works them in his own shop.

7825. But he engages the services of other men to work his frames?—Yes.

7826. And for that they have to pay him rent and bagmen's charges?—We call them master stockingers.

7827. Of that class of men Messrs. Brettel employ several?—Yes; we call them master stockingers, but not bagmen or middlemen.

7828. Then what is a bagman?—A man that brings out frames from a warehouse, and lets them out of his own house, and takes a certain amount of money for taking in; what we term the bagmen's charges.

7829. Do you know what a middleman is; have you any definition for him?—No; I know of no difference between middlemen and bagmen.

7830. Mr. *Mundy.*] You heard what the last witness said about it, did you not?—I did.

7831. What do you think about it?—I do not coincide with what he said; I disagree with him upon that point; men with a few frames, say five or six, we designate as master stockingers, not middlemen or bagmen.

7832. But a middleman and a bagman you consider the same?—We look upon them as such in our neighbourhood.

7833. Mr. *Biggs.*] What wages can a tolerably skilled adult workman earn in your county on a frame of the gauge of your own?—I consider it a good week's work for a man to make a dozen or 14 pair of wrought hose a week.

7834. What would be the amount of his earning for that quantity of work?—Mr. Morley gives the best price of any man in the trade, and at that price he would earn about 9 *s.* or 10 *s.* a dozen; that would be about the price.

7835. He would make how many?—He might make 14 pair.

7836. That would be 11 *s.* 8 *d.*?—Yes; but a dozen would be a fair week's work.

7837. That would be 11 *s.* 8 *d.*, out of which he would have to pay 1 *s.* for rent?—Yes.

7838. Leaving him 10 *s.* 8 *d.* net?—Yes.

7839. And 4 *d.* to the bagman?—Yes, if he worked to the bagman.

7840. You say the people think that if the frame rents were abolished they would avoid that charge, and still get the ame wages as they get now?—Yes, that is their impression.

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7841. They think that if these charges of the middlemen were also done away with by Act of Parliament the workmen would get the difference?—That is the impression of the workmen; and another reason why the workmen wish the bagmen to be dispensed with is, that in many cases they have frames of their own, and in a flat time they will spread the work intended for the manufacturer's frames among their own, and so the hands are only partially employed.

7842. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Who spreads the work?—The bagman.

7843. He stints, in fact?—Yes; in a brisk time it is generally so in our neighbourhood; they bring out work for the manufacturers' frames, and spread this work among their own frames, and therefore both the manufacturers' hands and their own are only partially employed.

7844. *Chairman.*] Do you not know that the manufacturer, if that were represented to him, would punish his middleman for so doing?—No; I believe it has been represented by certain parties.

7845. Do you know that as a fact?—It was done so at the strike.

7846. Do you know any instance in which, on its being brought directly to the knowledge of a manufacturer that his middleman had spread the work among other frames than his own, the manufacturer did not put an end to that cause of complaint?—I do not know that a manufacturer has been told it positively by deputations, but articles to that effect have been written, and this grievance has been laid before them.

7847. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Was this one of the grievances that was laid before the masters in 1849, when the strike took place?—Yes.

7848. The spreading of work between the frames of middlemen and the masters?—Yes.

7849. Are you sure of that?—Yes.

7850. Were you one of the deputation which laid it before the masters?—Yes.

7851. Was it done in writing?—No; we waited upon them.

7852. Did you go about and wait on individual masters, or did the masters meet you in a body?—We went to the warehouses.

7853. How many of you went?—Three or four.

7854. As a deputation from the workmen?—Yes.

7855. Did you, before you went as a deputation, meet publicly; were you sent from any public meeting?—Yes, of the workmen.

7856. When you met the masters, did you find them agree with you in opinion that it was wrong to do that of which you complained?—Yes, they admitted that it was wrong, but they said that they could not see any remedy for it.

7857. Did you point out to them cases that had actually happened; did you say, for instance, So-and-so, a middleman, does this?—We did.

7858. Did you point out many cases of the kind?—All the cases we possibly could gain information of.

7859. How many cases do you think you pointed out?—We pointed out three or four in our neighbourhood.

7860. Were those cases of middlemen working to large manufacturers?—Yes; chiefly Mr. Heard's and Morley's firms.

7861. Could you say that this was generally done by the middlemen of any one firm?—I can only speak as to my own neighbourhood; it has been done there often.

7862. Do you think it is done now to any great extent?—No; trade is so flat with some manufacturers that they cannot keep even their own frames employed.

7863. I understand you to say that the strike of 1849 was in consequence of the charge of 6*d.* a week for taking in?—No, it was not in consequence of that; that subject was brought forward, but it was for an advance of wages that we struck.

7864. But you did bring that subject forward as a grievance?—Yes.

7865. The charge of 6*d.* a week for taking in was one of the grievances complained of?—Yes.

7866. And in consequence of your representations that charge was reduced from 6*d.* to 4*d.*?—Yes.

7867. Was

7867. Was another grievance complained of, the spreading of the work that was given out?—Yes.

7868. Was that remedied too?—No.

7869. Was there any other grievance that you mentioned to the masters at that time; did you say anything about the frame rents at all?—Yes.

7870. You are sure you did?—Yes, we did at that time.

7871. To those masters that you waited on?—Yes, that subject came under consideration along with the rest.

7872. What did the masters say about frame rents?—The masters said the same then as they do now, that they could not see what benefit it would be to the workmen to have them abolished.

7873. What did they say with regard to the 6*d.* a week for taking in?—It was not touching the manufacturer's pocket in that case; it was touching the bagmen.

7874. But what did they say with regard to it?—Mr. Morley was the only individual who altered it; he thought that 6*d.* a week was too much.

7875. What did they say about spreading the work that was given out?—Mr. Morley could not find any remedy for it.

7876. You have been asked about the notion that the men entertained, and that you do yourself, that by taking off the rent of frames you will have an increase to that amount in your wages; is that your opinion and the opinion of the class of workmen generally?—I believe the opinion of the workmen, and of the parties I have had conversation with on this question recently, is, that they would prefer agitating for the abolition of frame rent and all charges.

7877. Suppose your wages were to be reduced by the shilling charged for frame rent, would you still rather have the frame rents taken off or not?—I believe a portion of the workmen would.

7878. Would you run the risk of it?—Yes.

7879. Do you think you would very likely get the same wages that you get now, supposing the frame rents were done away with?—I cannot see any reason why we should not receive the same wages as we do now. I consider that the abolition of frame rents would not be an injury to the honourable manufacturer.

7880. Mr. *Gardner.*] You cannot see what should prevent your wages from being raised by the amount of frame rent, provided you could only get an Act of Parliament for the stoppage of frame rent?—No; by the present system we rely on the manufacturers for a reduction, and we should then.

7881. You think that the sum at present paid for frame rent would go into the pocket of the workmen, do you not?—We labour under that impression.

7882. You think that their wages would be raised by that amount?—Yes.

7883. Sir *H. Halford.*] How is it that you think doing away with frame rents would be no injury to the manufacturer?—I believe that if the frame rents were abolished the tendency of that would be to do away with a great many independent frames. Now there are some of these bagmen who have frames of their own; for the policy that they act on is horrible in a flat time; there is not the least doubt that they will go and take work out at a reduced price, on purpose to get their frame rent and charges.

7884. Their object being simply to get as much frame rent as they can?—Yes.

7885. Without any care for the profit made upon the goods?—They care nothing for the profit on the goods while they can get their shilling frame rent.

7886. *Chairman.*] Why do people accept that kind of bargain, and take a reduced rate of payment for the stockings that they work, and also pay frame rents and charges; you say it is horrible; why do they consent to it?—They would not consent in a brisk trade; they are compelled to take it.

7887. Is it not, therefore, rather the consequence of a depressed state of trade which necessarily brings about depressed state of wages?—Some manufacturers in Nottingham are as dishonourable in carrying on their business as they are in Leicestershire; a hosier, named James, is always paying a less price than any other manufacturer at Nottingham.

7888. Mr. *Gardner.*] Does he give the workmen the sum he contracts to give them?—No; and the bagman will go and take it out at a different price.

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and that is the reason why the strike took place; there has been very much agitation as to this Mr. James.

7889. Sir *H. Halford.*] The bagmen will compete with one another to take out work at the lowest price in order to get the frame rent?—Yes, some of the bagmen will.

7890. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have said that some of the manufacturers in Nottingham, as well as in Leicestershire, behave dishonourably, and you single out the name of one individual; point out in what the dishonour consists?—He pays less than any other man in the trade, and is nearly always reducing the wages of his workmen, and that brought on this struggle; his hands now are on strike partially; they were wholly out, but trade being bad, they had no alternative but to go to work again.

7891. Suppose you went into a baker's shop to buy bread, should you conceive it to be dishonourable on your part if you tried to diminish his profits as much as you could by obtaining from him what you wanted for the smallest possible amount?—Yes.

7892. In what does the dishonour consist where a man enters into an agreement with workmen to work for him at a certain price if they do so voluntarily?—I think, that if one man gives one price, another ought to give the same amount if the work is equal to it in goodness; these parties I refer to do not act upon that principle.

7893. Do you not think that men of that kind get an inferior class of workmen?—Mr. James has had good workmen.

7894. Do you not think that the hosiers, of whom you speak, are acting dishonourably by getting an inferior class of goods?—They are not on a par with Mr. Morley's hands.

7895. They get a worse article, and pay less for it?—Occasionally they pay less.

7896. Mr. *Biggs.*] Does Mr. James take frame rents?—Yes.

7897. Is he not in favour of a net system and of the abolition of frame rents?—I never heard him express an opinion of that sort, nor has the deputation on the part of the trade, to my knowledge, uttered such a sentiment.

7898. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you represent that Mr. James obtained this reduction in the wages of his men by means of the bagmen?—Partly so.

7899. The bagmen took it at his price?—Yes, and the hands repeatedly struck, but the trade of the bagmen still went on, and in the face of the trade they took out work in different parts of the country.

7900. How do you account for the bagmen taking it out at lower rates?—Because some of these frames that they were taking work out to were their own frames.

7901. Sir *H. Halford.*] Their profit consisting in the frame rent?—Yes.

7902. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You think that they accepted the terms which were offered by Mr. James for the sake of the frame rent?—Yes.

7903. If that was an inducement on the part of these men, why is it that you do not keep your frame constantly employed, the rent belonging to you?—I do not act on that principle; it would be a bad principle to act upon. I should be running down the price of labour if I were to act upon that principle.

7904. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have thought a good deal about this subject; and that being so, I will ask you what you think would be the effect of the abolition of the frame rents and charges upon the workmen?—I will show you not only what are my own views, but the views of other men. I have here (*producing a Paper*) a statement, drawn up not by myself, but by another workman. He says: "The workmen have nothing to fear from the abolition of frame rents and charges, their condition under the system being so deplorable, especially so when only partially employed; and I believe it would not injure the honourable manufacturer; it would have the effect of in a great measure doing away with independent frames. The demand for goods would be greater. The manufacturers' own frames, not being so many frames at work, would be kept in better condition in a flat time. Many of them have to stand still, and get into bad condition. It would also have the effect of driving the unprincipled manufacturer out of the market. Many of them are supplied from their independent frames; and in flat times are the first to reduce the workmen's wages, and the consequence is, that the honourable manufacturer has to reduce also to go into the

the market with them. By this means his large stock on hand becomes reduced also.

7905. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Whose statement is that?—It is a statement which was drawn by one of the workmen, and the opinions of many of the workmen with whom I have conversed are to the same effect.

7906. Is that an opinion given by a person working at the present time in the trade?—Yes.

7907. And you agree with him in his views?—Yes; I believe them to be correct.

7908. That statement asserts two or three things; first, it says, that the effect of legislation would be to do away with the smaller and unprincipled manufacturers?—No; the independent frames; it would do away with them in a great measure, if the frame rents were abolished.

7909. So that the parties owning those frames would be injured thereby?—The parties owning those frames get a remunerative price for their frames already.

7910. You think that is sufficient?—Yes.

7911. So that the loss of the property hereafter is a matter of no moment; then it states that it would prevent an accumulation of stock?—Yes.

7912. Do you think that Parliament can regulate the accumulation of stock?—Yes; I do believe that if an Act of this sort were passed a great many independent frames would go out of existence; we as workmen consider our own interests, and not the interests of the bagmen.

7913. Sir *H. Halford.*] By independent frames, you mean frames which are the property of the bagmen, do you not?—Yes, and the framesmiths.

7914. Mr. *Biggs.*] Whose property would these frames become; it would not be to the interest of the manufacturer to become possessed of them; are they to become the property of the workmen, or to whom are they to belong?—That is a question I cannot solve.

7915. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Should you not turn your attention, as representing the workmen, to that point. You state that these frames being in the hands of certain parties who, in order to get them employed, reduce wages so that they may get the frame rent, you think an Act of Parliament would throw those men out of work?—I believe it would have the effect of driving the independent frames out of the trade.

7916. But those frames, unless you broke them up, would still be there for sale?—Yes.

7917. Then, if they were offered for sale at a low rate, some large manufacturer might purchase them?—Yes.

7918. And as long as he could sell his goods and keep the frames employed, there would be no harm done?—No.

7919. But a bad state of trade coming, and these frames being still in being and in employ, would not an accumulation of stock then tend to pull wages down just the same as it does now?—That is only a supposition; a manufacturer might not purchase those frames.

7920. Who would purchase them then?—I do not know whose property they might become after the frame rent was abolished; it would certainly prevent an increase of bagmen or middlemen in the trade; because men with a little capital can come and purchase a few frames, and in a brisk time they would get them employed.

7921. What do you think would happen when a bad time came: would not the workmen's wages be influenced by that state of things?—I will tell you what has happened: these men have brought work out at a reduced price for the sake of the frame-rents and their charges.

7922. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you not think that if there were no frame rents and no charges, and if trade were continuously bad for a long time, wages would be necessarily reduced?—I believe that if frame rents were abolished it would be for the benefit of the workmen.

7923. Mr. *Mundy.*] Even though wages were reduced?—No; we are arguing on a supposition on that point.

7924. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Suppose frame rents were to be abolished and trade to be good, and suppose your position were really improved in a time of good trade, and there then came a bad state of trade, and the manufacturer said to his workmen, "I must stop one half of you," would not the other half say, "Well,

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"Well, master, if you will keep us employed we will take a little less"?—I cannot say whether that would be the case or not.

7925. Is not that the principle that usually operates with the workmen?—I believe that the body of workmen would not do it in the same way as the bagmen would.

7926. How then are they to support themselves; suppose the master says, "I cannot continue you in full employ, and I must stop half the frames;" I want to know what is to prevent those men from saying, "Well, master, if you will try to keep on we will take less for our labour"?—They might act in that way; I do not say that part of the men would not.

7927. What would compel the workmen to take a little less?—Their circumstances, if they did so.

7928. Those circumstances would be brought about by a bad state of trade?—Yes.

7929. Can Parliament regulate those circumstances, do you think?—No, I do not say they can; but then Parliament could abolish the frame rent; and even while the frame rent is on, the workmen are only partially employed under the present system; we could only be as bad as we now are.

7930. Do you mean us to understand that there is no full employment for frames on the present system?—Not at present; there is sometimes, but there has not been for the last 18 months. Many of the manufacturers' frames are standing at present; Mr. Allen's, for instance, and the late firm of Heard & Hurst.

7931. *Chairman.*] Why do you think those frames are standing?—Through the flatness of the trade.

7932. When a flatness in the trade occurs, of course the profit to the manufacturers is very small?—Yes, of course it is.

7933. Do you really think that at a time when the profits of the manufacturers are very small, they could afford to pay a shilling frame rent, and 3 *d.* charges to their own bagmen, instead of taking it from the workmen; your view is, that the manufacturer himself ought to pay or find the frames gratis, and ought to pay the bagman himself for his charges. What I ask you is this: if the present rate of wages leaves to the manufacturer so small a return in the shape of profit, how could he carry on his business if he were compelled to forego a shilling for the rent, and to pay 4 *d.* to the bagman?—The reason why I think the bagman ought to be dispensed with is, that they are no benefit to the workmen. I think that the manufacturers ought to pay them, for they are for their benefit.

7934. Could the manufacturers afford to pay them, if their rate of profit is so small as it has been stated to be, even without those payments?—I cannot answer with respect to the profits made by the manufacturers.

7935. We all see what the unhappy effect of this is, that when the profits are very small he must discontinue his manufacture; that is, when there is a slack state of trade. Would it not make the distress more pressing if you called upon him to forego the shilling he gets on his frame, and to pay an additional 4 *d.* to the bagman; that would stop his manufacture altogether, would it not?—I do not think it would.

7936. But would not the effect of that be to diminish his profits?—It has been in all ages the interest of the workmen to get as much work as possible at the highest rate of wages, and it has been the interest of the manufacturers to get their goods manufactured as cheaply as they can; Mr. Morley is not so acting, though trade is bad; it is a flat time now, but Mr. Morley has not attempted to reduce his workmen; he remains at the same price; it has been the same for the last three years, and I infer that every other manufacturer ought to pay the same price for goods that Mr. Morley pays.

7937. But Mr. Morley gets his frame rent now; could he afford to pay the same price as he now pays if he were to forego his frame rent?—I see no reason why he should not; I cannot see that his price would be altered.

7938. Mr. *Biggs.*] Must not trade, to be useful to the workmen, be profitable to the employers?—I believe that to be so.

7939. If by legislation, or by any other means, you make the trade unprofitable to the employer, so that the result is that he does not continue to give employment to his workmen, would not that be a source of loss and disadvantage, rather than of gain, to the workmen themselves?—I think the manufacturer

facturer would get the price on his goods that he gets now. I see no reason why, if frame rents were abolished, there should not be the same price obtained, or even a better price, because it would have a tendency, I believe, to do away with the great bulk of the independent frames, and prevent other independent frames coming into the trade, and that has been the bane and curse of the framework-knitting trade; the independent frames.

7940. Would you not call the owners of these independent frames a class of manufacturers themselves?—No.

7941. Can you prevent the men owning them from setting up in the trade on their own account?—No, we cannot prevent it at present.

7942. Are you not aware that when a time of pressure comes, it invariably happens that these small manufacturers always feel it first, and are unable to stand against it?—Yes, they are.

7943. And that they are the parties who generally press upon the workmen in the first instance for a less wage?—Yes.

7944. How would you propose to prevent such a state of things existing if an Act of Parliament were passed doing away with frame rents and charges?—If the manufacturer could not give the proper price, I think it would be more honourable in him to cease manufacturing altogether, rather than reduce the wages of his workmen.

7945. Would you pass an Act of Parliament to compel that?—Yes.

7946. Sir *H. Halford.*] I understand you to say that the consequence of this profit being made by the frame rents is to bring a great number of persons into the trade who otherwise would not be in it?—Yes.

7947. A great number of persons who are not wanted in the trade, and who, in fact, are superfluous in it?—It has had that effect.

7948. Do you know whether many of these bagmen practice truck?—Not in our place now; they have done it to a great extent, but the agitation which was made some years ago demolished it, through the influence of Mr. Morley.

7949. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you think that any considerable portion of the workmen entertain the views you have been stating to the Committee, with reference to the expectation you have as to what would be gained to them by legislation upon this subject?—Yes, I believe they do. Certainly the workmen want some protection; we have laid at the mercy of the manufacturers and of the bagmen for years. Until these last two years there has been an advance, because there was a great demand which afforded an advance.

7950. You said that a workman would make a dozen pair in the week?—It would depend upon the quality.

7951. You were speaking of a dozen pair of a particular kind of hose; what would he receive for that?—They would be about 10 *s.* per dozen.

7952. We have had evidence that there is 1 *s.* charged for rent, the man working direct to the warehouse?—Yes.

7953. So that the man's net earnings would be 9 *s.*?—Yes.

7954. Are we to understand you to be of opinion that Mr. Morley, supposing an Act of Parliament were passed abolishing frame rent, would still pay the man 10 *s.* for the dozen he made?—I cannot say that.

7955. But you expect that, I suppose?—Yes, the trade does not expect that there would be any deduction from wages through the abolition of frame rent, and I think that many would prefer that of the two evils.

7956. You think that Mr. Morley would still continue to pay the 10 *s.*?—Yes.

7957. You are not aware, I suppose, of his having stated to the Committee that, supposing such a state of things to exist by legislation, he would not continue to pay the 10 *s.*?—No.

7958. Suppose he paid 9 *s.* after legislation, would the position of the workman be improved as regards his earnings?—Certainly it would.

7959. Will you tell us in what way you think his condition would be improved?—Mr. Morley has told the Committee that if he could no longer obtain rent for his frames, he should not give the same price per dozen as that which he now gives. I assume that instead of giving 10 *s.*, he would pay only 9 *s.*; would the position of the workman as regards his earnings be improved by that?—Not in the case of Mr. Morley.

7960. Do you not think that is the natural course of events?—Yes; but the workmen generally have suffered so intolerably under the charges and expenses in certain quarters, that they would prefer the abolition of the frame rent.

7961. Sir *H. Halford.*] Suppose all employers were like Mr. Morley, you do not think there would be much to be obtained by the abolition of the frame rents?—No. If they all acted as Mr. Morley acts, or if the bagmen acted as he acts, there would not be that desire to agitate against the frame rent that there is, but they do not act in the same manner.

7962. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If the bagmen were done away with by a system of legislation, would not the trade be open to the introduction of small manufacturers, even on a net system of wages?—Yes, it might be so.

7963. Then, when a bad time came, would not those small manufacturers be almost driven by necessity to reduce the wages of the workmen?—Of course, if they attempted that, it would be our duty, as workmen, legally to resist the attempt.

7964. Why, if you think you could do it in the case of the small manufacturer, could you not do it in the case of the bagmen?—We have attempted, and have succeeded in some cases, and in other cases we have not succeeded.

7965. Mr. *Biggs.*] I understand you to say you conceive independent frames to be a great evil?—Yes.

7966. When you come to ask for an Act of Parliament, it is proper that you should have thought of all the probable consequences of legislation; you propose to abolish frame rents; whose property are the frames to be; will you tell me your idea on that subject?—That is a question which I cannot solve. You have asked me that question before, and I said that I could not answer it.

7967. Will you let me put it in another way to you, then: would not an Act of that sort tend to increase the number of independent frames, by diminishing the interest that the manufacturers have in them at present?—I do not think it would.

7968. You have not thought about whose property they would become?—No; the parties owning them could either hold them or sell them, as they thought proper.

7969. The Committee conclude that you would abolish rents and charges by Act of Parliament?—Yes.

7970. And that you think the middlemen are an evil rather than a benefit; is that so?—Yes, I do.

7971. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You say you have kept your one frame employed about 18 months, together with your shop?—Yes.

7972. To whom do you sell the production of your loom?—To any person that will purchase.

7973. Are there any warehouses that you take them to in Nottingham?—No, I do not sell them to warehouses.

7974. To whom do you sell them?—I sold a dozen to a cousin of mine, a young woman pretty well off in circumstances; I sold her a dozen.

7975. Have you sold them to anybody else?—Yes, odd pairs.

7976. Do you go about selling them?—Yes, sometimes I take them in my pocket when I go about.

7977. Do you know anything of the existence of the evil which has been stated before the Committee to exist, by the manufacturers occasionally suffering from the embezzlement of their yarn?—Yes, it has been stated by the manufacturers; and if they have suffered in that way, it has been from the embezzlement of the yarn by the bagman; I know of one bagman Mr. Wilson employed, who was sent three months to gaol.

7978. Is there not a state of things, in which certain men working one or two frames, never purchase any cotton, but still produce stockings, and go about selling them?—I am not aware of that; I am aware that some of the manufacturers have suffered more from embezzlement by the bagmen, than they have from embezzlement by the single hands.

7979. *Chairman.*] Your wife works on a frame, you say?—Yes.

7980. What family have you; any children?—No.

7981. Who does the seaming and all those subordinate parts of the work?—I have no children of my own, but I have brought up two orphan children, and they are residing with me now; one is a girl 14 years of age, and I am learning that girl to work in the frame that I bought and call my own.

Mr. *Benjamin Elliott*, called in; and further Examined.

7982. *Chairman.*] IN speaking of the rate of charges in the silk trade, you say that sometimes they are 6 *d.* or 1 *s.* for the finer articles; I want to know on what principle it is that you increase the charges; how does the service rendered by the middlemen differ in the two cases?—It is an agreement between the middleman and the journeyman in consequence of the price and the quality of the work he is making, which operates from a low price to a very high price; as the prices get higher, there is a shilling taken; it is calculated at a certain rate, according to the amount of money the operative receives.

7983. It is really merely an arbitrary agreement, is it not, because there is no more service rendered by the middleman in respect of these fine articles, than there is with respect to the coarse articles?—Yes, there is.

7984. Just explain that if you please?—There is more in point of value and carefulness, and more attention is required to be paid to it; there is more labour also to perform on it, and the men can earn more; it is an agreement, and the workman pays a little more as compensation in that case.

7985. What labour does the middleman perform?—He has to watch and see that the work is made right, and he has to attend to it in different ways, such as giving out; seeing to the winding, seaming, the size, length and width, and so on; he has to look to everything, and see that it is done regularly; whereas a coarse article, and a lower price of goods, does not require the same amount of attention.

7986. It requires a more accurate examination, and a greater amount of supervision?—Yes.

7987. Does the middleman do anything with his own goods?—Not in a machine; not in making or producing the work.

7988. Not in seaming?—No.

7989. But it is merely that he has to give a more vigilant attention, is that so?—Yes.

7990. Mr. *Mundy.*] Are the majority of the frames now in Heanor in individual cottages or shops?—In cottages generally; they have one or two, or three frames, or in some cases as many as four.

7991. But you have sometimes as many as ten or a dozen in a shop, have you not?—I have 12 making silk gloves, and that is the largest in the neighbourhood at present, I think.

7992. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you a brother named Jonathan Elliott?—Yes.

7993. Where does he live?—At Alfreton.

7994. What is he?—A middleman or bagman; he gives out work and takes it in, in the same manner as I do.

7995. So that, from your own knowledge, Messrs. Brettel do employ bagmen?—Yes, we have one in our village who employs more frames than I do; there is James Frost, who works to the Messrs. Brettel, and there are other parties; there is Ogden and Danby, they carry on their trade in the same way as we do ours. In the next house to the one I live in, there is a man named John Fowler, who employs a number of frames direct to Messrs. Brettel.

7996. Then it is not true that they do not employ middlemen?—They do employ them; I can name many shops in Alfreton and Heanor that work to them.

7997. That is, middlemen working to Brettel's?—Yes.

7998. Do you know the last witness?—I do not personally.

7999. But from his admitted occupation, from his not having been for some time directly in the trade, and from his having been some years previously a committee-man, you do not consider him a regular continuous workman?—No; and I consider his statement, with regard to the bagmen, to be quite erroneous.

8000. Mr. *Wickham.*] Could you go on without bagmen at all?—I think I could not.

8001. Mr. *Biggs.*] In such a large concern as yours there would not be time to take all the work in at the warehouse in small parcels?—No; and what would

Mr. *B. Elliott.*

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be the consequence and the cost to the workmen of 60 hands going 11 miles? I do not average more than 6*d.*

8002. *Chairman.*] Could not one man take the work of several of the 60?—He might do so; but he would require to be paid at the same rate as I am paid.

8003. What do you get?—I get 4*d.* per frame per week.

8004. If he took in the work of half a dozen men, that would be 2*s.*?—Yes.

8005. That would be better wages than he would make by staying at home?—No, I do not know that it would be. I have 60 men employed, and there are not out of that number four who are competent to manage the machinery; they must be men who have had some practice; I understand it; frames constantly want regulating and looking after; they require to be kept in regular order.

8006. Then, but for you, the workmen would have had to send for frame-smiths?—Yes, and that is the part that we have to superintend.

8007. Mr. *Wickham.*] You are paid not merely for bringing out material and taking in the work, but for keeping the frame in order also?—I am responsible for everything, and for parties going round to see that the frames are kept in good condition.

8008. Mr. *Biggs.*] And you say that, from the small amount of your charges, if the workmen had to go in with their work and for their material themselves, they would lose much more than they pay you?—Yes; if there were a warehouse in every town, they would lose by it; it is a rarity that they have to wait long now; whereas if they went to the warehouse, they would have to wait perhaps half a day in many cases; they would be all flocking there; the men who work to me are generally better satisfied than they would be if they worked direct to the warehouse. I speak for myself and my own hands.

8009. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is it the case, that frequently, on a Saturday, the workmen who are left at home in the shop are left without cotton?—No; I have had my own frames employed by Messrs. Morley for the last 14 years; and they have never stood still a day; they have cotton sooner from the bagmen than they could get it from the warehouse; they deliver you out larger lots, and you then count it out in dozens, and deliver it out to the workmen; they seldom stand still; whereas, at the warehouse they are very jealous, lest they should have too much, as it is common for men getting it in that way to dispose of it. There is a class of men going round Nottingham, and in my village there are four or five of that sort who are ready to buy anything in any form; no longer ago than last Friday but one, I had to fetch 6*s.* worth of my own stuff out of pawn before I could send it to the warehouse; they call them Turkey men; they will buy that cotton up, and manufacture it up on single frames, which they keep at their own houses as a blind, pretending to work, and not working; they cause many a theft.

8010. Mr. *Mundy.*] They get the material at less than the usual price?—They get it for nothing. They will get it from anybody who will take it to them.

8011. Mr. *Biggs.*] In your judgment, are the small or the large manufacturers the greatest advantage to the workmen?—The large manufacturers; if you take the frame-rent off it will bring in a lot of small manufacturers. What protection will such people as the Morleys have? We shall have to reduce the prices. Another man will go and, having no machinery, will say, "I can afford to give you a shilling a dozen more than you are paid." He will rob me of my profit, and what is to be the consequence?

8012. The small manufacturers are generally the parties who first make reductions in wages, are they not?—Always.

8013. Is it an advantage, do you think, to the workmen, to be employed by large capitalists?—Yes, for 14 years we have never stood still.

8014. But there is an impression among the working men, is there not, that capital is a disadvantage to them?—Yes, but they see the disadvantage of that often; the men of small capital are the first men to reduce the wages.

8015. The smaller manufacturers are?—Yes; large manufacturers do not like altering prices. There are others besides Mr. Morley who pay the same price year after year.

8016. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Messrs. Morley and other manufacturers, with their extent

extent of business, cannot carry it on without having a considerable amount of capital embarked in the trade?—No, they must have a large capital.

8017. And any reduction of wages is felt, is it not, by a diminution in the value of the stock?—Yes.

8018. Mr. *Gardner.*] They get the best style of hands?—Yes, regular hands and the best machinery; there is no cost or pains spared on the machinery of Messrs. Morley, and other firms as well. There are other firms who have quite as good machinery for the quality of work that they want to produce, as Messrs. Morley have.

8019. Mr. *Biggs.*] The last witness considers independent frames a great evil; do you think so too?—I believe they are in many cases.

8020. If any Act of Parliament were passed by which frame-rents were abolished, would that, in your opinion, increase or diminish the number of independent frames?—It would increase the number; those that the manufacturers are now employing will become independent frames; the hands will be worse off, I think, than they are now.

8021. Mr. *Gardner.*] The effect, in your opinion, would be, that the trade would get into the hands of small men?—Yes.

8022. Sir *H. Halford.*] It would do away with bagmen?—No; it would increase the number of them, because there will be many frames thrown out by the large manufacturers, and the bagmen will take them up and manufacture for themselves.

8023. They would then be in a position to derive their profit entirely from the sale of goods, and not from the rent of frames?—They would sell the goods to the larger manufacturers, and they would pay their workmen in truck, and so cause a much worse evil to them.

8024. But they would not have an inducement to take out work from the manufacturer at a very reduced rate, in order to obtain their profit from the frame-rent?—They never do; I never knew a case of the sort; I do not do it.

8025. Can you answer for the whole trade?—I can answer for the trade in my neighbourhood, and I am only speaking for my neighbourhood.

8026. Because it is affirmed very generally that they do?—We do not in our neighbourhood.

8027. Mr. *Mundy.*] You can answer for the middlemen, but not for the bagmen?—No; but there is no reason to suppose they would do it, because it would be an injury to them as well as to the workmen.

8028. Sir *H. Halford.*] You were speaking of Messrs. Brettel; you say they employ intermediate persons as much as others do?—Yes.

8029. Do you know Mr. Wallis?—He is now dead.

8030. He was manager for Messrs. Brettel, was he not?—Yes.

8031. He, in the evidence given before the Commissioner, speaks of the employment of 2,000 frames by Messrs. Brettel?—Yes.

8032. And he is asked, "Do you employ any bagmen?" he answers, "Yes; but not more than five bagmen out of all the lot"?—I believe that applied only to certain places.

8033. The answer referred to the whole 2,000 frames employed in the cotton department?—I do not know how he might define them; I cannot speak to that.

8034. You know that the parties you have mentioned do act as middlemen to Messrs. Brettel?—Yes, I do.

Jovis, 28° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Gardner.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Mundy.	Mr. Wickham.
Lord John Manners.	Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Biggs.	

ROBERT INGHAM, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Thomas Greaves*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *T. Greaves.*

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8035. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—At Derby.

8036. What is your occupation?—I am a framework-knitter.

8037. Do you employ persons under you?—I work my own frames now; but, until the last 10 months, I had been a journeyman at Derby for 12 years.

8038. Who have you chiefly worked under during those 12 years?—For about four years and a half I worked to Mr. Pape, who was a middleman.

8039. Mr. *Mundy.*] Under what system did you work there?—We paid 3 *s.* 7 *d.* charges.

8040. You worked under the rent and charges system?—Yes; 2 *s.* was charged for what was called the middleman's profit; a shilling was charged for frame, and 7 *d.* for the winding.

8041. What was the habit of the person under whom you worked with regard to paying his men when they were sick?—They always paid full charges, whether they were sick or well; I myself was ill in bed on one occasion for a week, and never came down stairs, and the next week I went, towards Thursday, and I think I earned something like about 7 *s.*

8042. One week, you say, you were ill in bed?—Yes; it was an invariable rule to charge the rent in all cases, unless the men were away for months, and they could set the frame. If I could have sent a man to my frame, that man would have paid my rent; but I could not do that, and so I was obliged either to give it up or to pay rent and charges.

8043. Did you go to work the next week after you were ill?—Yes, on Wednesday or Thursday; I could not say exactly on what day I went to work again, but I believe it was the Wednesday afternoon. I earned about 7 *s.* and odd, and he took it all but a few halfpence, I believe; I had not 6 *d.* to take, I know, because he took the rent and charges for the fortnight.

8044. He took all you earned?—All but a few halfpence; and there were others besides me who were treated in the same way; it was not myself only, but everybody was treated the same; if calamities came over their family, and they could not attend to their work, the rule was to make them pay the full charges, or else to send somebody else to work in the frame.

8045. Do you mean that they paid all the charges, or only the frame-rent?—All the charges, 3 *s.* 7 *d.*; that was the amount of charges for narrow frames.

8046. What was the charge that was made when you only had enough work for a few days?—The rule was always to take full charges.

8047. Was this which you have spoken of a solitary instance, or was it the general custom?—It was the general custom; it was the case with every one. In slack times, when we had partial work, we might wait part or nearly all the week without getting material to work upon, and then he would come and perhaps lend us a few shillings, and take it off what we earned the next week.

Mr.

Mr. Collard acted in the same way; he was another big middleman of Derby; but they have both left since that time. Collard is gone to Loughborough, and Pape has been making some new invented machines to make round gloves.

8048. Collard pursued the same system, did he?—He did.

8049. Were you any time employed under Collard?—I worked with him for two years and a half, I think.

8050. And do you say that during all that time that plan was being pursued, namely, taking full rent and charges in cases of sickness, and in times of partial employment?—Yes.

8051. That was the plan which was pursued not only with you, but with every one, as I understand you?—Yes, it was a regular rule to do so; it was said, "If you do not like it, you must get a better job."

8052. Have framework-knitters diminished in number in Derby lately?—Yes, there are not half as many as there were seven years ago; that is, not half as many are at work; many of the frames are lying idle; there is no work for them; my frame is my own, and I take part of a shop to put it in, and a few other things connected with it. I think there are 10 frames up in the shop, and two lying down; there are 12 altogether, but there are only 10 on their legs; there are seldom more than five at work, and those five are working to two or three different warehouses; I believe that two of them, when they are at work, are working to Ward's, and there are two working to Wilson. Mr. Slack is the taker-in, but Mr. Wilson, I believe, is the hosier at Nottingham; he is a taker-in for Mr. Wilson, I believe. I believe there are two working for him, but there are three or four unemployed; they cannot find work for them, and therefore they are still; if they want a bit of an order, they send to the middleman, and he gets a man to do it; there are always plenty of men to be had, if they want them. There are a great many gone out to other employment; some are gone to the station; some have gone to work at the Cotton-lane foundry, some to Gate Yard, some to one place, and some to another, for the fact is, that work in Derby has been very bad for some time.

8053. *Chairman.*] When you say work has been very bad in Derby for some time, you mean work in the hosiery trade?—Yes.

8054. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do you recollect who you worked for in the year 1852?—Mr. Swaine.

8055. What were you making then?—I was making silk gloves.

8056. At how much a dozen?—I believe they were 2 *s.* 9 *d.*

8057. So much as that, was it?—They were either 2 *s.* 6 *d.* or 2 *s.* 9 *d.*; I forget exactly what it was now, but I made the thumbs and the hands, and another man fingered them.

8058. Was the frame in good order when you began?—No, it was in very bad order.

8059. I suppose that prevented your making so many as you otherwise would have made?—Yes; but the frame was not fit for anybody to work in; the man it belonged to was a man of very little money; he manufactured his own goods. I asked him for a job, and he said there was a frame there, but it wanted casting over and putting in order, but if I had a mind to use it, he said he would give me a little bit of work to do.

8060. What work did you do?—One dozen hands and thumbs.

8061. What were you charged?—Eighteen-pence; it was a 19-inch frame, making hands and thumbs.

8062. Do you mean the rent was 18 *d.*?—In the silk work, there are three different systems in Derby of taking charges. One is what we call the silk system; we have another which we call the Leicester system; and another the hose system of taking charges; now, the charges on the gloves I believe they have altered altogether, in the way of taking rentage, within the last 12 months; the hosiers generally are taking 3 *d.* a dozen, as dozenage, for rent, and the master takes three halfpence in the shilling profit, and a penny in the shilling for the seaming. When the work is taken in, the hosier takes 3 *d.* a dozen, as dozenage, for rent.

8063. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is there any rent charged in that case?—No, not in gloves. I do not think there is a hosier in the town who takes rent on gloves, but they do on hose.

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8064. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you call this system the net system?—No, it is a charge system.

8065. Mr. *Biggs.*] What is it called?—We call it the silk-charge system.

8066. Mr. *Mundy.*] You say there are three systems; explain to us, if you please, what those systems are?—One system is, what we call the silk system; in that case, it is three halfpence in the shilling from every shilling you get. Suppose I fetch work out from the warehouse at 4 *s.* a dozen; when the work goes in to the warehouse, the master makes it 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, because he takes 6 *d.* off for his profit; when he has taken this 6 *d.* off for the profit, and made it 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, then there is the winding. I might as well explain this, that out of the three halfpence in the shilling he pays the winding, and the other is for his own profit; the winding would be about a penny, or a penny farthing; that would be rather too much; we pay 4 *d.* a score; it is something above a penny, but not quite a penny farthing.

8067. Mr. *Wickham.*] That is in addition to the 1 ½ *d.*, is it not?—No, this 1 ½ *d.* covers the winding and the profit; if there is 1 *d.* for the winding, and the dozen is 4 *s.*, he has taken the 6 *d.* from the 4 *s.*, and made it 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, and that pays for the profit and the winding, and then the seamer and the workman gets the other.

8068. Then the whole deduction is 1 ½ *d.* in the shilling?—Yes, that pays the profit and the winding; but there is the rent and standing besides; there is 1 *s.* for the frame rent, 3 *d.* for standing, 1 *d.* for the cocks, and 1 *d.* for the carrier.

8069. Then there is 1 ½ *d.* in every 1 *s.*, and 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week besides?—Yes.

8070. Mr. *Mundy.*] That is the silk system?—Yes.

8071. What do you call the Leicester system?—We used to pay 3 *s.* 7 *d.*, but the man that took that odd 1 *d.* has left Derby now, and at this time they pay 3 *s.* 6 *d.*; they make such things as Cashmere gloves, and red spun silk, or anything of that kind. That 3 *s.* 6 *d.* is divided in this way; there is 1 *s.* for the rent, 6 *d.* for the winding, and 2 *s.* for the master's profit for taking in and fetching out the work.

8072. That is what you call the Leicester system?—Yes; except you are four days out of work, or so, you have to pay the full rent and charges; that is the regular system that is acted on at the present time; it is not merely that it has been so in times gone by, but it is acted on now; even this week. I called the other day at the shop of Mr. Fearn, the last master I had before; I told them I was coming up to give information concerning the rents and charges system going on in Derby, and they said they hoped I should tell how things were; and I said I would, as far as I knew; they said they hoped the rent and charges would be taken off, for there never would be any good done while they were on.

8073. Is there any other system?—Yes, the hose system.

8074. Will you have the goodness to explain that system to the Committee?—There is a man in the same shop where I work, who is making silk hose at 12 *s.* a dozen, and out of that he pays 1 *s.* for rent, 2 *s.* for seaming, 6 *d.* for the winding, 3 *d.* for the standing, and 1 *s.* for the master's profit. On the wrought hose, at Belper and Derby, everybody pays rent as they used to do, but on the gloves they pay upon the other system, and 1 *s.* for the master's profit; the man had been doing this for a fortnight; I mean he had been working at that on which he is at work now; he took his work in next Monday; he was not allowed to take it in before, because they were taking stock; when he took work out again they told him he must pay a fortnight's rent for the dozen; the man grumbled at that, and said that that would take all the workman had earned; they said, "We must stop the frame then." He said, "Well, you had better stop it than take all the man gets." However, the man sent in a dozen, and he says he expects they will take the whole fortnight's charges for that dozen; he has generally had one dozen a week.

8075. Lord *J. Manners.*] If they take a fortnight's charges, that will make it 1 *s.* more?—Yes.

8076. Mr. *Mundy.*] That will be 5 *s.* 9 *d.* then, for the fortnight?—Yes.

8077. What will he have to receive?—Six shillings and three-pence.

8078. This is from Mr. Swayne, is it?—No, it is from the shop where I work in.

8079. Who is this from?—The shop where I work in now, where my frame stands.

8080. At the present time?—Yes.

8081. In 1853 where did you work, do you recollect?—I believe I worked at Belper.

8082. Did you ever go to Hinckley?—Yes, I was there a month; trade was very bad at that time; we had been standing a good bit; we had had some independent frames of Mr. Hopkins's, the framesmith of Derby; they were all independent frames; they would not employ them, so I went to Hinckley and took a frame there.

8083. Who would not employ them?—Ward's; we had been generally working to Ward; the manager had left, and there was a different system carried on with them; they would not employ the independent frames, so I was obliged to leave and take a frame at Hinckley.

8084. You had an independent frame of your own?—Not then, they were Mr. Hopkins's; but they were rented by a man named Fearn, and I went to Hinckley, and took a frame under Mr. Thomas Allen.

8085. How long did you work for him?—A month; the first week I made six dozen of what we call fours-legs; there is another person to foot them.

8086. At what price is that done?—A shilling and a halfpenny a dozen, I believe.

8087. Did you pay the rent and charges in that case?—Yes, the frame was 6*s.* a week; a four-hose frame.

8088. Do you mean the rent was 6*s.* a week?—The rent and charges; I believe the rent at the warehouse was 3*s.*

8089. Mr. *Wickham.*] What did you earn, if you paid 6*s.* 3*d.* charges?—I made six dozen the first week; that would be 6*s.* 3*d.*, and the frame came from a little village called Burbidge; I put it to work, and they took 2*s.* off that week, because I put it to work; so I had 2*s.* and some odd halfpence to receive.

8090. The frame was not in good order, was it, when you began?—It was not in bad order; but it was shifted from another village, and I had to put it up and make it workable. It took me a day and a half to make it right.

8091. Mr. *Cobbett.*] How long did you work in that week?—Four days and a half, or nearly five days. It was work I had not been much accustomed to; when I worked in Leicester I used to make hose in the wide frames.

8092. Mr. *Wickham.*] What do you call a day's work; ten hours?—I should work more than 10 hours.

8093. Mr. *Gardner.*] One day with another?—Yes.

8094. All the six days in the week?—Yes; I should say I work more than 10 hours when I am regularly employed.

8095. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say you made six dozen; if you had been fully employed, from Monday morning to Saturday night, how many dozens should you have made in the same time?—The next week I was fully employed.

8096. Mr. *Mundy.*] And how many dozens did you make then?—I believe eight dozen.

8097. Mr. *Biggs.*] You are speaking of a hose frame?—Yes.

8098. You only made eight dozen, you say?—Yes; I had not been accustomed to the sort of work.

8099. You were not, in fact, an average skilled workman?—No, I was not skilled in that work; the next week I made 12 dozens, I believe.

8100. *Chairman.*] How many dozen did you get up to?—Fourteen dozen in the month, I think; I got 14*s.*, and there were men who they said could make 16.

8101. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mention 16 as being the greatest number?—An average good hand would make 16; if a man worked 16 hours a day, and was an active man, then he would make more.

8102. That would leave him about 10*s.* net wages, would it not?—Yes.

8103. You are speaking of an ordinary skilled workman?—Yes.

8104. Lord *J. Manners.*] Is that working 16 hours a day for six days in the week?—No, he would get more money if he worked hard.

8105. How many hours a day do you suppose a man would work to produce 16 dozen?—Ten hours a day.

8106. Mr. *Gardner.*] Every day?—You cannot work 10 hours every day, because on Monday morning you cannot get your stuff; you have to wait until he

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he comes back from the warehouse, and in that, perhaps, you lose half the day, and then you have to work extra hours the other days of the week to make up.

8107. How many hours in the week would he have to work to produce the 16 dozen?—It would take him 10 hours a day to make them.

8108. That would be 60 hours in the week?—Yes.

8109. Mr. *Cobbett.*] What he lost one day he would make up the next; is that what you mean?—Yes.

8110. Mr. *Mundy.*] You worked four or five weeks, I think you say, before you were able to make 12 dozen?—I made 14 dozen, I believe, the last week in the month; I got better every week, but it was such a poor job, and such very hard work, that I wrote off to Mr. Fearn again to ask him if he had any work; he said he had a bit, but he did not know how long it would last; so I left the job I was upon, and went back to Derby to him again.

8111. Are you with him now?—No, I am on my own account, working for myself. I sell my own goods in the market, and I find I can do that a deal better; I can sell what I make as fast as I make it; I make it as it suits me, and I find it a much better way of getting my living.

8112. Mr. *Biggs.*] You realise by that means the wages of the workman and the profit of the manufacturer?—Yes; of course I get the profit, and the frame is my own.

8113. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is there not a depression in the trade just now?—Yes.

8114. Do you not find it difficult to get rid of your production?—No, I can sell it as fast as I can make it; I could sell more than I do if I could make it.

8115. Lord *John Manners.*] Was the frame you bought an average good frame at the time you gave 50 *s.* for it?—It was a very good frame; it will stand me, I should think, six or seven years.

8116. Have you had to spend any money upon it in repairs?—I only put a new set of needles in it.

8117. May we assume that 50 *s.* is the average price of a decent frame in Derby?—That is what I gave for it.

8118. Mr. *Biggs.*] In what condition is it?—It is not a new inside, but it had been new moulded within six weeks of my having it. The man I bought it of did it up for another man, and let it to him, and he had it six weeks and did not pay any rent for it; and he then asked me if I would buy it, and I wrote to my sister, and she sent me the money to buy it, and some cotton as well.

8119. What is the average value of a good carcase with a new inside?—I could tell better if I saw the frame; there are many different sorts of carcases, and different styles of making them.

8120. But you must understand my question; what would be the value of an average carcase with a new inside?—It would be like a new frame; perhaps it would be worth 6 *l.* 10 *s.* or 7 *l.*

8121. At least?—I had a 27-gauge frame belonging to Mr. Hurst, with a new inside, offered to me for 6 *l.* 10 *s.*

8122. You never knew a good frame, in good condition, and newly moulded, to sell for 2 *l.* 10 *s.*?—No, I said that mine had been newly moulded a short time before I had it, but it will not stand moulding above once more.

8123. Mr. *Mundy.*] But it is in good working condition, you say?—Yes; and it will stand me five, or six, or seven years.

8124. Can you state what your earnings are now?—It is not only my earnings, I have profits as well; and I have other ways of getting a little besides, by buying and selling.

8125. You find it to your advantage to work in this way?—Yes, I can get a comfortable living now, and I never could for many years before; I always had an anxious desire to appear respectable, and be respectable.

8126. *Chairman.*] You were able to become possessed of a frame through your sister's kindness?—Yes.

8127. Mr. *Mundy.*] What is the condition of the great body of the frame-work-knitters in your district at the present moment?—Very bad indeed; they have very little above half employment, and many of them are with nothing at all to do.

8128. At this moment?—At this moment.

8129. Lord *J. Manners.*] And yet, being only half employed, full rent is demanded

demanded from them?—Yes; if they had only one day's work in the week, they would not pay the rent that week; but if they paid them a little that week, and found them work the next week, they would, when they reckoned at the next week's end, take the fortnight's charges.

8130. Mr. *Mundy*.] That is the rule in the town, is it?—Not with all; the silk system is different from the cotton and wool system; the silk system is to pay according to what they do, only they take in addition rent and standing; they take 3 *d*. in the 1 *s*.; the workmen pay according to what they do; that is far better than paying 3 *s*. 6 *d*. when they have had nothing to do; that is what they call the Leicester system.

8131. Lord *J. Manners*.] In your opinion, could the silk system be applied to all branches of the trade?—Yes.

8132. Mr. *Biggs*.] Have you any preference for one system over another?—Yes.

8133. Which do you prefer?—The silk system.

8134. Why?—Because you pay according to what you get; on the other system you pay whether you get it or not.

8135. You say the condition of the workmen is very bad there just now?—Yes; it is for want of more trade; Messrs. Ward employ a great many hands, when they can find work for them. There are two of Ward's frames in our shop now, and two of Wilson's, of Nottingham, and one of Mr. Longden's, and there are two of Mr. Bury's, a framesmith in Derby.

8136. And are all these fully employed?—No; there are seldom more than four or five at work, and they are not above half at work now.

8137. And in these cases is the full rent taken?—Yes.

8138. And the charges?—They pay charges according to what they get, 1½ *d*. in the shilling; it is a more honourable way of proceeding, to pay according to what you get; for a man to pay half his wages for rent and charges, whether you can find work for him or not, is very wrong, but it is a system that has been carried on to a great extent in Derby; that is what we call Leicester work, that is, it was founded in Leicester, and it is called Leicester work, such as cotton gloves, spun gloves, and woollen gloves; they are making woollen gloves now; I called at the shop where I used to work when I came away.

8139. Mr. *Gardner*.] I understand you to say, that the workmen in Derby are badly off just now, because trade is in a bad state?—Yes.

8140. Does the bad state of the trade there arise, in your opinion, from the existence of the rent and charges system?—I could not say exactly that that was the case; I could not say how it might operate; it is a bad system, there is no doubt of that.

8141. But I want to know whether the badness of trade is, in your opinion, owing to the system of rent and charges; you are engaged in the trade yourself as a manufacturer, and therefore it is fair to suppose that you know something of the causes of bad trade?—That seems to me to be a question I do not know hardly how to answer; I have no doubt that rents and charges do operate very badly on the trade. I know that, at the present time, there are men coming for work from different villages round Derby, who have frames of other people's; they come in and say, "Will you find me a bit of work? I have nothing to do; my own frames are standing still; if you will give me a bit of work, I will find the frame, and pay you 3*d*. a dozen besides."

8142. The workmen then, in fact, are the very persons who insist on this system being carried out?—Of course they are; they are starving.

8143. How do you propose to remedy that, by Act of Parliament?—If a man is starving, what would you have him do?

8144. After your Act of Parliament putting an end to this system is passed, what do you propose to do with a man who is starving, and who insists on taking these wages under the rent system?—I do not know what I should do with him; if the manufacturer could not stop his wages, of course he would not employ him; it is the stoppage system that makes him employ him.

8145. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Do you mean to say, that if the stoppage system were abolished the workmen would never be in such a position as to be in want, and perhaps almost starving?—No; I mean nothing of the kind.

8146. Assume him to be in such a position, do you think he would not then

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go and offer his labour at a reduced price if necessity compelled him to do so?—If he did, the master could not stop anything from his wages.

8147. Would his position be better than it is now in any way?—Yes; if a man went to a warehouse for work, and the manufacturer could not stop part of his wages for frame rent, he would not employ him.

8148. If legislation were to put a stop to these frame rents and deductions, do you think the workmen's wages would remain the same as they are now?—No; but if there was no stoppage from a man's earnings, the manufacturer would not employ him unless he wanted the work done; but now he often employs him for the sake of the rent he gets out of him.

8149. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose you were to do away with frame rents by Act of Parliament, and so destroy the incentive for the employment of this man, he would, in that case, get no employment at all, as I understand; what then would become of him?—He must do as he does now, find some other employment, or go into the union workhouse; there is no other course for him to pursue.

8150. How would the passing of such an Act of Parliament as you contemplate benefit his condition, then?—I believe that trade would be carried on better; at present, it is one man working under another; there is one honourable manufacturer doing his business in an honourable way, and another manufacturer taking double the rent. We will say a man has 100 frames, and he cannot find work for 50, but he gives work out to all the 100 frames in order to get the rent of them; by so doing, in slack times he gets the whole of the rent for the machinery, and on the other hand, if he was not allowed to stop the rent and charges, he would only employ as many frames as he could find work for.

8151. Practically speaking, the wages of the workmen are reduced by the amount of these excessive charges, are they not?—I believe so; I believe that the charges are the cause of it. There is scarcely a middleman in Derby who has not his own frames. He goes to a warehouse and gets work out; I could name names, and tell you all about what they do; where they have five or six frames of their own, they will go to a warehouse and bring out work for six frames, and having six frames besides of their own, they will divide the work among the 12, and take full rent from each one.

8152. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say the number of stocking-makers has diminished considerably within the last few years, at Derby?—Yes.

8153. How do you explain that; what is the cause of it?—One cause was, as perhaps you may remember, that five or six years ago there was a turn-out, a three-counties union, and it operated very badly on Derby, for the masters were paid by the manufacturers to take the frames out of the town, to the amount of 60 or 70 frames.

8154. You say there is a great want of employment in Derby?—There is.

8155. Do you not think that that want of employment is the great cause of the present low rate of wages?—Yes; I do.

8156. Do you not think that if a man working upon the rent system now gets 8*s.* a week less 1*s.*, he would work upon the new system which you advocate for 7*s.* a week?—In that way he would.

8157. If that were so, how would he be benefited by legislation?—It would not operate so at all.

8158. Why do you think so?—I have partially told you before that manufacturers are working one against the other; an honourable manufacturer has no chance with an unprincipled manufacturer. The unprincipled manufacturer divides his work out into as many frames again as it would properly employ, on purpose to get the rent of the frames; the honourable manufacturer, on the other hand, gives it out as well as he can; sometimes it gets into the hands of a middleman, and then he divides it out in the way I have described.

8159. Sir *H. Halford.*] Is it the middlemen, generally speaking, who make the bargain, or who transact the business entirely with the manufacturers?—Yes.

8160. The middleman making his profit by the rent, and being but little careful what wages the workmen obtain?—Yes; suppose I am a middleman, and that I come to a manufacturer; I have 10 frames of the manufacturer's, and perhaps 10 of my own, or five; we will say 10; the manufacturer gives me out work for the 10 frames that belong to him; I, having 10 frames of my own, put the work into 20 men's hands, merely for my own benefit.

8161. His

8161. His interest is, is it not, to take out work, whatever the price paid for it may be, in order to procure the frame rent?—Yes.

8162. Without any regard to the wages paid to the workman, the rent is his only consideration?—Yes; I do not think the manufacturer in that respect has anything to do with the middleman's business; he gives it to him to make it right, but the middleman takes it out, and works it all to his own advantage.

8163. Is it not a question between the middleman and the manufacturer what the prices shall be?—Yes.

8164. That is settled between them?—Yes.

8165. A middleman, having frames of his own, and being desirous of making a profit by them, it is a secondary consideration with him what price he takes the work at as regards the wages of the workman?—They seldom care what price they take it at in slack time; they will take it at any price, in order to get the rents and charges; that is an invariable rule; they do not work themselves; they give the work out, and get their living out of the men that work I once worked at Leicester, some time ago, for Mr. Cummings, under the factory system, and I never was so happy in my life as I was when I was there; I went on the Saturday night to receive my money, and there was no stoppage; I received the whole amount of my earnings.

8166. *Chairman.*] If you were so happy, why did you not stay there?—It was work in the fine-gauge frames, and it was the end of the season; the trade fell off, and we were all put out of employment.

8167. Is it not the case that, when trade is bad, the workmen's condition declines also, whether they are working under the factory system or under the charges system?—On the factory system, if you have but little work, you have the benefit of it, whereas under the charges system you have no benefit at all.

8168. You have spoken about a person, when work is scarce, going and offering to reduce his wages by 3*d.* a dozen, for the purpose of being employed; suppose under any system there were a great scarcity of work, how could you prevent a man coming forward and, rather than starve, offering to work at an under price?—I do not see how you can prevent it; if a man is starving, and has a family at his heels crying for bread, he will go anywhere, and work for anything.

8169. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You say that a flat time came, and that then Mr. Cummings was obliged to suspend operations in his factory; what is there to prevent the workmen from going to Mr. Cummings, and saying, "We understand you are compelled to stop your mill owing to a bad trade, but if you will try to keep us at work, we will work at so much less?" is not that a natural state of things?—It is.

8170. In what respect would the position of a man, working under the frame-rent system, be different from that, if he were put on the net system; would not the same pressure operate upon him as might operate in the case of Mr. Cummings's workmen?—It might; you cannot tell how the thing would operate.

8171. But when you come to this House to recommend an Act of legislation, interfering with the interests of a great number of people, you ought to come prepared to state your view of the prospective operation of that Act, and I ask you again whether the position of a workman, under a net system, would be different from or be better than that which you state to exist in the case of the workmen in Mr. Cummings's employ in a factory?—I believe it would be better.

8172. In what way?—I believe the factory system would benefit the trade materally. I believe that there would not be so much competition with the manufacturers, one underselling another.

8173. Does the factory system, when a manufacturer is compelled to suspend his operations in a time of bad trade, prevent a workman in the mill from offering, if he chooses, to work for less wages than he received before?—No, we stopped working when I was there.

8174. Have you not already stated, that it was the want of employment which caused the pressure upon the workmen in the case of Mr. Cummings?—Yes.

8175. Would there not be the same pressure on the workman in a time of bad trade, if he were working under the net system on the loom?—I think not.

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8176. Why in the one cause should it operate with a pressure which you say would not exist in the other?—I could not speak for every man, but if they stopped me, and asked me if I would work for a little less, I should not consider that it would be right to do so.

8177. *Chairman.*] I suppose a manufacturer says, "Trade is very bad; I cannot give you the same wages I have been giving you; you must either wait for better times, or if I give you employment, we must divide the loss between us; you must take less wages, and I must take less profits;" would you not in such a case as that take less wages?—I think not; I would take to some other work.

8178. If a person now feels that he does not get what he ought to get, he has the power of taking another job, has he not?—He has to work under the old system.

8179. A bad trade would affect all in the trade equally; if it was bad with Mr. A. it would be bad with Mr. B., and the workman must, in that case, take to something else, must he not?—I think it is not an honourable way to carry on business. I think that if a man takes out gloves or hose at 4*s.* a dozen, it is better that he should give them out at a net price, and not say, when you have made them, "I will take so much off for rent and charges?"

8180. What we want to know is, what would be beneficial to yourselves; how would a person's situation be benefited by legislation; if trade falls off, a manufacturer must economise in some way or other to meet the failing market, and if he cannot buy his materials for less, he must give less wages; the one party must submit to less profit, and the other to less wages till times mend; must not that be the case under any system? Under the factory system, you say, you would not necessarily accept less wages, but you would find other employment in a slack trade; why cannot you find other employment now?—It happens so; but how is it that the stocking-makers generally are so very wretched and badly off?

8181. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you stated to the Committee the earnings of the stocking-knitters in Derby?—No.

8182. Will you then state them, if you please; you say they are in a very wretched condition?—Do you mean the average earnings?

8183. Yes?—There are some old men who do not stand much chance.

8184. *Chairman.*] Take the case of a man of your own strength and standing?—There is a man who lives neighbour to me who cannot make above half a dozen a week; he is an old man.

8185. Mr. *Biggs.*] Give us the average of a tolerably skilled adult workman in good health?—I will take the case of a man who works in the same shop with me; I know what he can do and what he does; he is making now silk hose at 12*s.* a dozen. I believe that if he had full employment (for he is an active man and a good hand), he would make a dozen and a half a week.

8186. Lord *J. Manners.*] That is on the silk system?—Yes.

8187. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That would be 18*s.* a week?—For a first-rate hand.

8188. Now give us the deductions from that?—There would be 3*s.* for seaming, and 9*d.* for winding.

8189. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Do you mean 3*s.* a dozen?—No, 3*s.* for the dozen and a half; and 1*s.* 6*d.* the master's profit.

8190. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is that the middleman's charge?—Yes, a shilling a dozen, and 1*s.* 3*d.* for the frame and standing, if he had full work; we are giving him a full week's work now, as much as we think he could do.

8191. That would leave 14*s.* 3*d.* net?—Yes, for an active man, a man about my own age, and a very good hand.

8192. Is that less than other labourers in Derby are obtaining when in full employment?—Yes.

8193. What other trades are better remunerated?—There are the weavers; of course they are getting a good bit more money.

8194. Where?—The broad silk weavers, and the narrow silk weavers; and there are jacquards.

8195. That is a fancy trade?—Yes.

8196. Is it not always the case, that in fancy trades labour is better remunerated than it is in others?—We used to call ours a fancy trade, but it is got down till there is no fancy in it; ours was called a first-rate fancy trade a few years

years ago; but it is got so now that there is scarcely a man in Derby who has got 6*d.* at the end of the year.

8197. Is your complaint against the 14*s.* 3*d.* net wages received?—No, this is a silk-hose man; but on the cotton hose they get much less.

8198. But you have very little of the cotton hose in Derby, have you not?—Not much, but it is all round us; at Belper, and many other places, there are wrought-hose frames.

8199. The figures you have given us apply to the silk system, do they not?—Yes; there are three systems in Derby.

8200. Now give us the average earnings of a man working on what is called the Leicester system?—The man has other expenses besides; there are the needles; there is a little oil and soap, and all those sort of things, which every week come from the man's profits.

8201. Mr. *Mundy.*] Are you speaking still of the silk system?—I am speaking still of the same man I have been speaking of.

8202. Mr. *Cobbett.*] How much would those things you have just mentioned come to?—Sevenpence or 8*d.* a week for needles, and other little things; they work with iron needles, not steel; I often tell them it is a great disadvantage to them.

8203. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Then the workman's net earnings would not be much more than 11*s.*?—No, and this is a full week's work; but how will it be the next fortnight, with only a dozen for the fortnight?

8204. With reference to your answer to a previous question, it appears that, when in full employment, this framework-knitter obtains 10*s.* 10*d.* net after these deductions are made?—Yes.

8205. Supposing the right to make these deductions to be abolished by legislation, what, in your opinion, would be the price per dozen paid to that framework-knitter?—I should say there ought to be a meeting held with the manufacturers to take an honourable view of the question, and to consider whether they should take the whole amount off the workmen, or take part of the frame rent off, and give them the benefit of that; I could not say how the thing would operate.

8206. But although looking forward to this prospective legislation, and having made this a matter of discussion among the workmen, you have not formed any idea how the system would work if it were put in operation; in the first place, I will ask you whether you have a clear idea in your own mind that the man would receive 18*s.* without any deduction whatever; that is, that he would receive 12*s.* a dozen for his work?—I do not think he would.

8207. What do you suppose he would receive?—As I have said before, that is an after-consideration; if the manufacturers would honourably take the rent off, there would be that in the workman's favour; and if the middleman insisted on having his exorbitant rents and charges, of course the workman would not stand much chance; but if the Legislature prohibited the middleman from taking rent and charges from the workman, then of course the middleman could not take it.

8208. Mr. *Gardner.*] But he might pay him as small wages as he could get the work done for, might he not?—He might give the work out for less wages. I do not know whether the Act would operate so as to let him do that or not, or whether under the Act he would be considered a manufacturer or an agent; I am not aware how far the law goes in that respect.

8209. Would it not be the best plan, do you think, at once to pass an Act of Parliament, stating the price at which stockings should be made?—The ticket system brought that on; when it was first passed, they gave me a ticket of my work; but the middleman, who had 30 frames, could not write his own name, and had to fetch a man out of the shop to write the tickets out for him.

8210. What do you think is a fair remuneration for a man who works 60 hours a week; I mean, how much do you think he ought to carry away with him?—I think 15*s.*

8211. Would it not be a much shorter and better plan to pass an Act of Parliament, enacting that no frame-work knitter should work for less than 15*s.* a week?—I think it would be a very hard thing to get.

8212. We want to know what, in your opinion, the operation of an Act of Parliament abolishing frame rents and charges would be; do you believe that the gross wages which are now paid would remain the same if these deductions

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were done away with?—No; I will tell you what I believe; I believe that there would be a more honourable system of carrying on the trade.

8213. What do you mean by "more honourable system"?—If a man took out gloves at 4 *s.* a dozen, and he took 4 *d.* in 1 *s.* off the 4 *s.*, of course that would leave 8 *d.* in 1 *s.*; and then if a workman made only one dozen, he would have no more to pay than for the dozen he did; but if he does a dozen now, and the middleman takes it all for rent, he has nothing. It would be a benefit if they were compelled to give us a certain sum; they would have to give the work out at so much a dozen; and then if a man made but one dozen, he would be paid accordingiy; but now if he earns only 1 *s.*, the master takes that 1 *s.* for himself.

8214. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Let us follow up your view; at present the man has 12 *s.* per dozen; that is a nominal payment, inasmuch as deductions are taken off which reduce it to 7 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen, making his earnings 10 *s.* 10 *d.* a week? —You are on the hose system now; we were on the glove system; you must bear in mind that there is a difference in the deductions in the glove system and in the hose system; there is more trouble in the gloves than in the hose, and therefore they take a little more for it.

8215. Practically, then, the workman now receives 7 *s.* 6 *d.* net, though he has 12 *s.* nominally; when the deductions, amounting to 4 *s.* 6 *d.*, are taken off, that leaves him 7 *s.* 6 *d.*?—But then there are other little expenses besides, such as needles.

8216. Would you put those at 3 *d.* a dozen?—Three-pence would not pay it.

8217. Would it leave him about 7 *s.* net?—Yes.

8218-19. Suppose Parliament should legislate in the mode you suggest, and suppose there should be a meeting such as you propose between the manufacturers and the workmen, and a manufacturer were to say to his workmen, "Why you are, in point of fact, working for me for 7 *s.* a dozen net; I will at once observe the Act, and pay you 7 *s.* a dozen net;" how, I ask, if that should be the result, would the actual position of the workman be improved by such legislation?—I think there would be an improvement. We have taken 5 *s.* out of the 12 *s.*, leaving the workman 7 *s.* on the present system; on the other system, he would not have to pay that.

8220. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I want to know what view you have formed in your own mind?—We will say the man pays 4 *d.* in the shilling.

8221. *Chairman.*] You admit that out of the 12 *s.* he would get 7 *s.* net, and then you are asked what would be the result if, when they come together, the master should say, "I will give you 7 *s.* net?"—I will show you where the benefit is; we will suppose the Act to be passed, and that the workman agrees to make a dozen at 7 *s.* instead of 12 *s.*; suppose this week the master gives him six pair to make, that being all he can give that week; the workman will then have for the six pair 3 *s.* 6 *d.*; now, on the present system, he would have rent to pay for the whole week, and the middleman would have his charges; he says, "I have the trouble, and I must have my charges." I think that if it was fixed, the middleman and the unprincipled manufacturer could not give to the workman half a week's work, and charge him full rent for it.

8222. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think that the middlemen would be called in to attend such a meeting as that which you have suggested?—I should hope so.

8223. What part would they take in it?—If they took the same part that they have taken, it would be a selfish part.

8224. We are speaking upon the supposition of a law to do away with frame rents and charges being passed, and that a meeting would be held between the mannfacturers and the workmen?—Yes; we will suppose the manufacturers, the middlemen, and the workmen were all sitting down together to make an arrangement. I, for one, would not take a farthing, either from any manufacturer or from any honest middleman; but I should like there to be one fair system between us all, so that a middleman could not take an undue advantage of a man who has no power over him; a workman has no power over a middleman; he is obliged to sit down by what the middleman has a mind to say or do.

8225. If such an Act as is contemplated were passed, would there not be much less occasion than there now is for the interposition of middlemen at all? —Yes; I think that the manufacturers would take a little of the profit that the middlemen now take; the middlemen would have to go to work along with us.

8226. Would

8226. Would not the effect be to restrain a good deal the profits which are now made by middlemen?—I think it would.

8227. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Reverting back to the 7*s.* net, I think I understood you to say that, at a period of full employment, there would be no difference between the position of a workman then, and what it is now; he would have 7*s.* net as he has now?—Yes.

8228. But the ground of complaint would arise when the employment became partial, the charges and rent remaining the same?—Yes, that is my complaint.

8229. Assuming that we have got to a net system by Act of Parliament, and that, a time of slack trade coming, the master says, "Instead of giving you out a dozen of hose this week, I can only give you half a dozen," what is to prevent a workman from saying, "Master, I have a family to support; half a dozen will not enable me to support them; I will take less than 7*s.* a dozen if you will give me a full quantity of work;" what is to prevent a workman from saying that?—I cannot tell what is to prevent it.

8230. Would any legislation whatever prevent a workman from taking that position?—I do not think it would wholly, but I think it would a great deal.

8231. How so?—Because, as I have said before, the power is in the middleman, and the workman has no power over him to say, "You shall do me justice."

8232. What compels a manufacturer to give out only half a dozen instead of a dozen?—He does it because of the rent.

8233. Do you mean that if the manufacturer has an active demand for his goods, and if he can sell the produce of his looms, he will still, for the sake of that profit, keep them only half employed?—I do not understand you.

8234. You say the reason why he gives out half a dozen instead of a dozen hose is because he wants the rent of his frames?—Of course it is. We will say you have 100 frames, and the trade falls off, and you have not enough work to supply them all with full work.

8235. My question is, what leads the manufacturer to say, "I cannot employ 100 frames, but only 50?"—Because he has not work to supply them with. The reason why he gives only half work out is because he cannot find them all full employment.

8236. What compels him to give out only half work?—Because he cannot find trade.

8237. And can Parliament find trade?—Parliament can keep the manufacturer from taking full rent for half employment.

8238. Can Parliament find work for him?—No.

8239. In what way then would the position of the workman be bettered by such legislation as that which you come here to advocate?—We should not have half work, and full rent to pay.

8240. Mr. *Gardner.*] Assume the net system to be enforced by Act of Parliament, and that the workmen go on receiving 7*s.* a week, making two dozen stockings at 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen, and suppose that soon a time comes when the employer says, "It is no use your making me two dozen a week; I have only sale for one dozen; you must make only one dozen in future." Your idea is that the workman would still go on receiving the 3*s.* 6*d.* for the dozen he does; but what is to prevent the employer from saying, "This will never do; my machinery is standing still half the week; I must indemnify myself for loss of capital; I can only give you 3*s.* instead of 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen in future;" what is there to prevent the employer from saying that?—He would not say so, because he would not keep the machinery for no other purpose than getting rent; he would have no more machinery than he could employ; whereas, now he has machinery from which he has to get his fortune; that is the system.

8241. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The impression on your mind is, that the operation of an Act of Parliament would be to throw a certain quantity of machinery out of use?—There is a great deal more machinery on hand now than can be employed even in a good time.

8242. But you think that the effect of an Act of Parliament would be to throw a portion of that machinery out of employment?—Yes.

8243. Would it not be the natural course, for a workman thus thrown out of employment, and who had been accustomed all his life to be employed in that trade, to go to the manufacturer and say, "If you will find me employ on such

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frames as you keep in employ, I will work for you for 6 *s.* 6 *d.* or for 6 *s.* a dozen"?—They would not say so; the frames would be totally out of use; if a man was not allowed to let frames, taking full rent for half work, he would not keep frames he did not want at all; he would sell them.

8243.* Suppose there are 100 frames at work under a manufacturer, you say that the temptation of obtaining frame rent, whether employment is fully or only partially given out, is such that he is induced to keep the 100 frames in a time of bad trade partially employed now; but by the legislation you propose, 50 of those frames would be thrown out of work, while the other 50 would be kept in full employ. Do you think that that would be the operation of legislation on this subject?—I think it would.

8244. Is it not probable that the 50 workpeople thus thrown out of partial employ altogether would have a temptation of this sort; would they not go to the manufacturer and say, "If you will find us frames with full employ we will take 6 *s.* a dozen, though your price is 7 *s.*"?—There might be odd men who would say that, but not others.

8245. *Chairman.*] What would the others do?—They would find some other employment; they do so now, and would do so more rather than be more imposed upon. The more a man is ground down, the more he has to look out; ever since I was born I have found that poverty was the mother of invention. A man invents something; when he finds he cannot get a living one way, he tries to get it somehow else; but while he can get partial employment he lives in hopes that trade will mend; his family is impoverished more and more from year to year; from the beginning of his life to the latter end of it he lives in the hope that trade will mend. There has been a time when we obtained good wages, but it is not so now; gloves were made seven years ago at 6 *s.* a dozen; they are making them now for less than 3 *s.*, and it is the very same article.

8246. Sir *H. Halford.*] You think that there is a great deal of superfluous machinery in the trade, do you not?—Yes.

8247. But the workman having to pay rent gets no benefit from that superfluity?—No, it is a great injury to him.

8248. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is there not also a great superabundance of labour in Derby?—There was when I was under this system; but I am on my own account now; I manufacture my own goods.

8249. Is it not the case generally that there is a want of employment during six months in the year?—Yes.

8250. Is not that enough of itself to explain the distress which prevails among the working classes of Derby?—There are not many in our trade in Derby.

8251. Will you be pleased to answer my question?—It solely arises from want of employment; from the machinery being kept in such quantities on purpose for the manufacturers to reap advantage from it.

8252. Do you think the demand for goods would be increased if such an Act of Parliament as you propose were passed?—No.

8253. If the demand is not increased, do you think wages can be raised?—Yes, I think so.

8254. Will you explain to the Committee how?—If an Act of Parliament were passed, so that a man was not allowed to take full rent for half work, people would not keep frames merely for their own benefit, as they do now.

8255. *Chairman.*] The effect would be to reduce the number of people employed, would it not?—Yes.

8256. And those thrown out of work must either starve or find some other employment?—A number would be wholly employed, while the worst hands, who can really hardly be called stockingers, would not be employed.

8257. Mr. *Gardner.*] Other parties would be thrown out of employment or on the parish; you do not care where they go to or what becomes of them?—They must do as people in other trades do; when they have nothing to do they must find a job, and do something else.

8258. Or go on to the parish?—Yes.

8259. Persons brought up to one particular trade often experience great difficulty, do they not, in finding employment in another trade?—They cannot all find employment.

8260. Is it easy, for instance, for a framework knitter to get his living as an agricultural labourer?—I believe that an active and strong man could get a job.

8261. Mr.

8261. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have said that it is the custom in Derby to take whole rent for half work, and also to take rent in cases of sickness?—Yes.

8262. And you cited two instances in point?—Yes.

8263. Do you know them of your own knowledge, or do you only speak from hearsay?—Yes, I am the very man.

8264. Do you know, of your own knowledge, that that custom is common, universal, or uniform?—Yes, I do; I have talked to the men upon the subject.

8265. The men who are employed by Morley's and Brettel's and other houses?—Yes, and Wilson's; Morley does not employ many hands there now; very few indeed.

8266. It is Wilson's, Morley's & Brettel's, is it not?—Yes, and Ward's.

8267. Do those firms which you have mentioned take whole rent in cases of sickness; they are highly respectable firms?—I do not know what they do in cases of sickness; I was speaking of the middlemen's doings, and not of the doings of the manufacturers. I know now an old man who cannot make half-a-dozen a week, hardly, or if he does he must work very hard to do it; he is one of Mr. Wilson's hands, now working in the same shop that I am working in; they will give him half a dozen a week, and he will not have above three or four shillings; they charge him the full rent; that has happened within the last month.

8268. You mean to say, that it is the custom of the middlemen to do these things?—Yes.

8269. But you do not mean to say it is the custom of the manufacturers?—It is the custom of Mr. Slack, who is the agent of Mr. Wilson.

8270. Do you mean to say that Wilson's, Morley's, Brettel's, and Ward's all take full rent for half work; do you mean to represent that that is their custom?—I only speak of those I know who have been working in the same shop as myself, and of no others.

8271. But you come here to advise the intervention of legislation for the prevention of a custom which you say is common and general?—Yes; and it is so.

8272. In every instance in which we have had manufacturers examined before this Committee, they have always emphatically denied that they ever practised taking full rent in cases of sickness and half-work; are you aware of that?—Then all I can say is, that they do; and what is more, I can bring a man here that has paid them only within the last three weeks; I can tell you who the man is, and also the manufacturer, and you can have them up; I will warrant it is the fact.

8273. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there many frames in use, that you know of, of no greater value than yours?—Yes.

8274. Are they paying full rent?—Yes.

8275. A shilling a week?—Yes.

8276. The value of yours being 50 *s.*?—Yes.

8277. Lord *J. Manners.*] You find a good deal of difficulty, I have no doubt, in answering theoretical questions as to the future, but you can give us plain answers as to the past; when Mr. Cummings at Leicester had to give up work, owing to the slackness of the trade, are you at all aware whether at that time it entered into the heads of any of the workpeople to go and offer him their services at less wages than they had been receiving?—Not that I know of; when I went in he told me the fine work was about finished; I worked in a 40-gauge frame; I worked in a 33-needle one, with very fine thread.

8278. I wish you, if you please, to confine yourself to answering the questions that are put to you; did the workpeople go and offer to work at less wages?—No, not when I was there. I went to Mr. B's., and got a job there without any trouble, so that I was not likely to do so.

8279. Mr. Cummings had no inducement to continue to work his frames, not receiving rent for them in a slack trade, had he?—Yes, he had an inducement, because the factory system afforded him an inducement; there is the 4 *d.* in the 1 *s.*

8280. I do not think you understand my question; Mr. Cummings, who was working on the factory system, had no object, in a slack trade, to continue to work his frames?—No, not any.

8281. But under the frame-rent system the manufacturer or the middleman has a direct object in a slack state of trade, has he not, to continue to give out

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work, though the trade happens to be slack and bad?—Yes, it would be of no use Mr. Cummings employing frames when trade is bad; not a bit.

8282. Therefore is it likely that if frame-rents were to be abolished by Act of Parliament, there would be the same inducement as there now is on the part of the employers of labour to give out work in slack trade for less wages?—They would not give it out unless they could have some benefit from it, and on the factory system they would have no benefit; a man would not employ 20 frames if 10 frames would answer his purpose, and do the work, because the 10 frames would bring him in just the same amount as the 20 would.

8283. If a meeting were held, such as that to which the honourable Member for Lancashire has alluded, and if the masters and workpeople agreed on a certain fixed payment, that payment would hold good in cases in which the people were only half employed, and there would be no deduction from that payment in the shape of rent or charges?—If that was the agreement, of course it should not be broken without the three parties meeting and consenting to alter it.

8284. When you were asked the question, did you understand it to be a permanent agreement, which was to hold good in times of slack trade, as well as in times of full employment?—I understood it so.

8285. Therefore, even if the full amount of the difference were taken by the manufacturers under the new system in times of slack trade, the workmen at any rate would have a security that there would be no deduction in the shape of frame-rent?—Yes; I understand as much as that.

8286. Generally speaking, your opinion, I suppose, is, that rent and charges tend to keep a larger proportion of frames in the trade than there is a legitimate demand for?—Yes, and for nothing else.

8287. You think, I suppose, that if rent and charges were to be abolished, the trade would fall into a more natural and healthy state?—That is my opinion.

8288. And is it also your opinion that the workpeople, with the view of getting their trade into a natural and more healthy state, would be willing to run the risks which have been brought under your consideration to-day?—I could not answer that question.

8289. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know what became of the workmen who were discharged by Mr. Cummings, under the circumstances you have mentioned?—They got jobs at other work; they got into some sort of employment in Leicester.

8290. Do you know what became of them?—Yes; they went to work elsewhere.

8291. How do you know that?—Because I saw them.

8292. How many were there of them?—Perhaps there were six or seven of us.

8293. Were you one of the parties?—Yes.

8294. What happened to you?—I went to Mr. B's., and got a frame there.

8295. Was that on the factory system?—Yes.

8296. Did you get the same wages there as you had had before?—Yes.

8297. Do you believe that the other men also got the same wages?—I believe so.

8298. What was the state of the trade at that time?—It was not very bad, only on the fine work; it was just between the seasons; they go so long and then stop, and then you get a job on some coarser work. Fine work does not stand long, perhaps only for three or four months in its season, and not so much as that sometimes.

8299. I suppose Mr. Cummings had completed an order, or had some reason or other for discharging his workmen?—Yes.

8300. Have you any other employment besides that of a knitter?—No.

8301. Are you connected with any trades union or society at all?—No.

8302. Not officially?—No, not in any way.

8303. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I understand you to say that you manufacture your own goods?—Yes.

8304. Have you any frames in your employ?—I have none but my own.

8305. How many have you?—One.

8306. You say that at the present moment you find trade bad?—Yes.

8307. Can

8307. Can you tell the produce of this one loom?—Yes; I could sell more than I do if I could make it.

8308. Then trade, as regards your loom, is not bad?—No.

8309. Have you ever yet experienced a time when you were not able to sell the produce of your loom?—No.

8310. You, as a manufacturer, possessing one loom, do not know anything of a bad state of trade; is that so?—I do not.

8311. I want to know how you would act in the event of such a bad trade coming on that you were not able to find employment for this one loom; you tell us that the middlemen, under those circumstances, still go on, and work the looms for the sake of the rent?—Yes.

8312. Would you do so, or not?—I have no rent to pay; the frame is my own; there is only 3 *d.* for the standing.

8313. Lord *J. Manners.*] You gave us some figures, which showed that a workman under the silk system could earn 10 *s.* 10 *d.* a week?—Yes.

8314. Can you tell us the average earnings of a workman on what you call the Leicester system?—On the wrought hose, do you mean?

8315. You divided them into three classes in Derby, did you not?—Yes; the hose system, and the glove silk system, and the Leicester cotton and wool system.

8316. I want to know whether you can tell me what would be the average earnings of a workman on the Leicester system?—It is cotton gloves; there are none making cotton hose in Leicester; the system is to pay a shilling rent.

8317. Can you tell us what, in your opinion, if you have an opinion about it, would be the average earnings of a workman on that system?—A tidy good hand, I should say, would get 10*s.*

8318. That is within 10*d.* as much as a workman gets under the silk system, is it not?—Yes.

8319. Do you mean he would get 10*s.* net?—Yes; but, mind you, I am now speaking of a good hand; an active, good workman.

8320. And on the hose system, what do you suppose he would get?—I have told you, 10*s.* 10 *d.*

8321. I thought that was on the silk system?—Yes.

8322. In some of your earlier answers you divided the Derby trade into three classes?—One was the silk hose system, and secondly the silk glove system.

8323. What was that?—We were on the 4*s.* cut glove. Do you mean to ask me what would a man earn at that?

8324. Yes, I do?—I should say he would make four dozen; we reckon that to be an average week's work; there are men who work at extra hours, and they would do five dozen; but we call four dozen an average week's work; and, deducting the charges from that, there would be three halfpence in the shilling from the amount, the 1*s.* 3*d.* rent and standing, and 1 *d.* cocks, and 1 *d.* carriers; if you deduct that, that is the earnings.

8325. *Chairman.*] Sixteen shillings is the gross amount of the earnings?—Yes; four dozen.

8326. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The rent and charges are 1 *s.* 5 *d.*?—Yes.

8327. What is the 2 *d.* for?—A penny for cocks, and a penny for carriers.

8328. Lord *J. Manners.*] How much do you put those deductions at?—There are other expenses, of course; there is the needles, and all those sort of things.

8329. *Chairman.*] That you put at 7 *d.*?—But we have not taken off the seaming yet; there is 9 *d.* a dozen for seaming; they will not seam them for nothing; and the master takes a penny in the shilling from the seamers themselves.

8330. Lord *J. Manners.*] Would the average wages in that case be about 9 *s.*?—Yes.

8331. Mr. *Gardner.*] All these systems are the same, in fact, so far as rent and charges are concerned?—They are not so bad as taking a standing charge; if a man does only one dozen, he only has to pay 1½ *d.* in the shilling.

8332. But they are all subject to deductions of one kind or another?—Yes.

8333. Mr. *Mundy.*] You said you never were so happy in your life as when you were in employment at Mr. Cummings', at Leicester?—Yes.

8334. What was the cause of that; was it owing to your receiving higher wages, or what?—Because, when I had done a dozen, I knew what my work came to; on the other system, I might go on working, and the master might say

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say, when he came to settle with me, "I have got docked to-day." "What for; my work was good?" "Well, they found fault with it at the warehouse; it did not pass, and they docked off so much." In that case I should have to stand the deductions and charges, and all the expenses. But on Mr. Cummings' system I went on, and if I made glove hands at 13*d.* a dozen, and made 16 or 18 dozen, I knew what I had to take, and took it straight away.

8335. And on that account you were better satisfied?—Every man was pleased with his system who worked under it.

8336. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean to say that Mr. Cummings never makes a deduction for imperfect or bad work?—I never said anything of the kind.

8337. You said, that one of the causes of your happiness was, that you were not subject to docking?—I say, that the middleman takes the work in, and that the workmen often get docked through him.

8338. Did Mr. Cummings ever dock at all?—No; if the work did not suit him, he would turn the men off.

Mr. *Jeremiah Briggs*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *J. Briggs.*

8339. *Chairman.*] YOU are a Solicitor at Derby?—Yes.

8340. I believe you have paid a great deal of attention to questions connected with the hosiery trade?—I have.

8341. Mr. *Mundy.*] You were concerned, were you not, in the case of Chawner *v.* Cummings?—I was solicitor for the plaintiff in that case.

8342. That was a proceeding under the Truck Act, was it not?—The object of that action was to get the payment of wages without stoppages, by a decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, under the Truck Act.

8343. And since that time you have devoted a good deal of attention to the subject, have you not?—Yes, with the same object; with a view to restrain stoppages from the payment of wages.

8344. Can you tell us any particular instances of oppression that have come to your knowledge?—I have known of a great many; I have had a case in which the rent of 1 *s.* a week was taken where the workman had no work for nine weeks; in the tenth week he had work which came to 11 *s.* 6 *d.*, that was for making a dozen of silk stockings; the employer stopped 10 weeks' frame rent, and offered him 1*s.* 6*d.* That case came to me, and I sued the employer, and then he paid 9*s.* 6*d.*; he paid the 9*s.* 6*d.*, after deducting 2*s.*; that was for two weeks' rent. I consented to that, because I considered that it would take two weeks to produce that quantity of work.

8345. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have you any objection to give the name of that employer?—I should not like to give his name, because he is an alderman of Derby.

8346. Lord *J. Manners.*] If it was the subject of an action, the name of the party would appear in the newspaper, I suppose?—It did not go to an action; it was paid before the action.

8347. Mr. *Mundy.*] The money was paid?—Nine shillings and sixpence was paid.

8348. Mr. *Wickham.*] Was it paid without remark?—No: "I enclose you 9 *s.* 6 *d.*, which is the price of making 36-gauge hose, after deducting 2 *s.* for two weeks' frame-rent."

8349. He received 2 *s.* for two weeks' rent?—Yes, out of the 11*s.* 6*d.* for the work.

8350. That was the sum that he received?—Yes; the effect of this was that the day after, the man, as a matter of course, had the frame taken from him.

8351. The man lost his frame?—Yes, by enforcing his right.

8352. The master would not employ him any more?—He had a notice: "You are hereby required to give up the 36-gauge frame you now hold belonging to" the employer.

8353. And the man had to get work elsewhere, wherever he could get it?—Yes.

8354. Have any other instances of the same kind come to your knowledge?—I have had cases in which men have come to me with complaints of the system; but I never could succeed in putting a stop to the frame-rent being deducted from the wages; men have come to me and said, that they have had only 2½*d.* to receive, after the frame-rent and charges have been deducted.

8355. That

8355. That has been for their week's wages?—Yes, but I could not alter it.

8356. And that has not been an uncommon occurrence?—I have letters in abundance in which parties write, that the deductions from their wages are so much, and in which they desire to know whether they can get redress.

8357. Have you such letters in your possession now?—Yes; I have tried an action in the county court at Derby, with a view to put a stop, if possible, to the system of making stoppages from wages; but I could not succeed, on account of the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of Chawner *v.* Cummings; that decision was, of course, binding upon the county court.

8358. *Chairman.*] That was a truck case, was it not?—No, it was an action brought for the stoppages that were made from the wages; the earnings were so much a dozen, and then at the end of the week 3 *s.* 7 *d.* was the amount stopped for frame-rent and charges. "Deduct for frame rent, 3 *s.*; winding, 7 *d.*" I tried to get the wages without that stoppage in the action of Chawner *v.* Cummings, but I failed; Lord Denman decided against it. I tried it in the county court, and it failed on the same ground. I had a letter from Nottingham; a man said, "I wish to make a statement of facts for publication; for five weeks I was unavoidably compelled to go out to do other work, and let my frame stand; when I came to work at the frame, I had to pay five weeks' charges." I could do nothing with it after the decision in Chawner *v.* Cummings.

8359. What, in your opinion, would be the best remedy to be applied to the existing state of things?—I think that a law should be passed for the payment of wages without stoppages; it should prohibit the stoppage of wages for frame-rents and charges, so that the full and entire amount of all wages, or the earnings of labour, should be actually and positively paid in the current coin of the realm, without any deduction or stoppage of any description whatever, except for bad and disputed workmanship, as in the case of a printer.

8360. *Chairman.*] How, in that case, would a person be compensated for the use of his frame?—The same as a printer.

8361. By paying less wages?—The manufacturer or middleman would then pay less per dozen; a middleman, now having work for four men, will spread that work among 16 for the sake of the frame-rents and charges, which are stopped from the earnings of the workman. If there were a law for the payment of wages without stoppages he could not do that; he would not keep more frames than the work he had would employ, and the frames he did not want of course he would part with; but they would be purchased by employers, who would pay for the work in the same way; so it would give better employment.

8362. If the demand for goods is not sufficient to enable a manufacturer to give out full work for his frames, and he is obliged to sell them, how would the person purchasing them be able to find full work in a time of slack trade?—Because though one man cannot find full work for his workmen and pay without stoppages, others would.

8363. Is not the measure of the power of employment the demand of the public for goods; and if so, how would any transfer and shifting of frames from one person to the other, enable the trade at large to give full employment?—I take it that an employer should calculate what the labour would cost him; no employer as a manufacturer can now do it, because a middleman with 16 frames, stopping from 16 men all they earn for frame-rents and charges, pays nothing for labour; how can an honourable employer sell his goods in the market against goods obtained by stopping for frame-rents and charges?

8364. You think, then, that the price of the commodity is too low to the customer?—No; a man would make more, and sell them at less per dozen than he does now, in consequence of stopping what a man earns for frame-rents and charges.

8365. You say that a manufacturer who may take, of course, any course he thinks fit, could not sell in the market so as to compete with the present price received by the middleman?—A manufacturer paying a shilling a dozen for his work without stoppages, cannot compete against a middleman paying 15 *d.* nominally, but when he comes to settle stopping all a man earns, and paying nothing.

8366. That is to say the middleman undersells him?—The middleman destroys the trade, no doubt.

8367. Is not that the case; you say he cannot compete with him?—He does not

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not undersell him; he destroys the trade and ruins himself, and certainly to an extent impoverishes the workman.

8368. Do you not think that if the middleman ruins himself by pursuing such a course, that is sufficient to induce him to alter his mode of carrying on his business?—No; because what security has the workman that he will receive what is due for his work? I understand wages to be the reward of labour; in making stockings, the workman only finds the work; the machinery is the property of the employer, and the workman makes the stockings at so much per dozen; that is the wages now. By the Truck Act, you cannot stop wages for goods; but if you stop wages for frame-rents and charges, the wages are not paid; the lesser evil of paying in goods is illegal; the greater evil of stopping for frame-rents and charges is not illegal, and the workman is ruined.

8369. What I wanted you to give me an answer to was this; if I understand you rightly, the manufacturers if they are inclined to deal fairly, cannot compete with the middlemen in the market?—Not without doing the same thing; what I mean is, that a manufacturer, paying for the work without stoppages, cannot sell the article against a man who has stopped for frame-rent and charges.

8370. He cannot sell at so low a price?—No, he cannot.

8371. Then that man is underselling him?—Yes.

8372. Do you consider that by doing away with that man, the honest manufacturer would be able to secure a higher price for his goods?—Yes, he would get a better price, from a larger quantity being made from a less quantity of machinery; and in that case machinery would not be kept for the purpose of stopping the frame-rent and charges.

8373. He would get a higher price?—In the long run.

8374. Do you think that raising the price of the produce of frames would increase the demand?—It would not raise the price of the article; a workman now, in making stockings in a frame, is limited to making a small quantity, in order that another man may be put on another frame to make the same limited small quantity; so that two frames are kept to do one man's work. A man, if he did all the work in one frame, would do double the quantity, and thereby the work would be cheaper done by that one man than it is done by the two, in consequence of the stoppage for frame-rent and charges.

8375. That which you consider the honest and proper mode of carrying on business, any manufacturer might, of course, without the intervention of the law, adopt himself?—No, he cannot.

8376. The reason why he cannot is, because he would be undersold by the middleman, is it not?—The law must step in to secure him.

8377. The law stepping in to secure him, would be a law abolishing the middlemen?—No, it would be far from abolishing them; it would set them up, because if a middleman goes to a hosier, and takes out stockings at 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen, when he brings them home, having four frames, he says to one man, "I will give you so much less per dozen, that is, 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, I finding the frame. I shall find less frames, and give every man more work; but now, if I get work only for four frames, I spread it over 16; the consequence of that is, that 16 men at the end of the week get nothing, whereas I get all they earn for frame-rents and charges.

8378. I understand you to say, that the reason why a manufacturer cannot introduce of himself the improved system upon which you would wish him to carry on his business, is that he would be undersold by the middlemen?—How can any manufacturer make stockings against a competition which I consider unprincipled?

8379. How would you propose to rectify what you consider an unprincipled competition?—I go to remove or to prevent fraud; that is what all laws of the kind are made for.

8380. But whether it be a fraud or not, the goods are sold under the system of middlemen at the same price as that with which, according to the system which you wish to introduce, a manufacturer cannot compete?—He cannot compete with those goods made under the stoppage system.

8381. But by any alteration of the law preventing that system from being carried on, do you think the manufacturer would be able to get a better price for his goods than he gets now?—By the common law of England the system of stoppage is illegal; you cannot make it the subject of a set-off. Lord Den-

man

man has decided that; in consequence of that decision it is necessary to make the law the same as in the Truck Act. The object of the Truck Act is to prohibit the stoppage of wages for goods; and in this case I say it is necessary to prohibit the stoppage of wages for frame-rents and charges.

8382. The result of that would be, to prevent the middleman from carrying on his business as he does now?—No, far from it; the middleman would be in a better position.

8383. An alteration in the law would prevent the middleman carrying on the business in the way he does now, would it not?—His business is making stockings; it would not prevent him from doing that.

8384. You want an alteration of the law, to prevent the middleman from carrying on his business in the same manner as he carries it on now?—Yes.

8385. Then, being delivered from the competition of the present mode of carrying on business, the manufacturer will be able to get the price which he cannot get in the face of this competition?—The manufacturer would be able to get a better profit than he gets now; it would be more certain; no workman would be thrown out of employment at all; a printer, if he were to stop the rent of the press from the wages of his workman, would ruin the printing trade in the same way as the stocking trade is being ruined by the stoppage system; the printer finds the press, the machinery, the type, ink, and everything necessary for the workman to work in the press for him, and he pays him so much per day, or so much per token, without stoppages. Here it is known what the labour will be of making these stockings; the middleman will not be hurt, because whether he finds his own frames or uses the manufacturer's frames, he will give a workman so much less per dozen for his work, and the workman then, if he only makes a dozen, will get paid for that dozen; the middleman would in such a case be anxious to find the workman all the work he could, and the workman would be anxious to do all the work he could at one frame instead of the work being spread over more, because if the middleman could not stop the rent for the frame, he would not be likely to keep at his own expense two frames when one would be sufficient for the business. That is why the new system is better for all parties; it does not prevent letting a frame as between man and man, the same as goods may be sold between man and man; but the employer, by law, cannot sell goods to a workman in his employ; if he does he cannot set off the value of those goods; and, again, he cannot bring an action at law to recover the price of the goods supplied to those workmen; a middleman, if the law were made the same with regard to him, could not stop frame-rents and charges from the wages of his workmen. If a man is in his employ, he could not supply him with a frame either to set it off or stop it, or bring an action for it, because there is no rent; it is only a fiction, a custom; a man in the employ of his master cannot rent the article in which he is employed, because he has not the use of it; it is the employer who has the use of it when the man works in it for his employer; and, therefore, I am satisfied of the good it would be to all parties.

8386. Lord *J. Manners.*] Have you drawn any Bill that you think would remedy the evil that is complained of?—The Bill of Sir Henry Halford is a Bill, the object of which is to prevent stoppages from wages in the hosiery manufacture; in other words, it is a Bill for the payment of wages without stoppages; that the full amount of the work earned shall be paid in coin, without any stoppage or deduction.

8387. Mr. *Mundy.*] Do you think that some measure of that sort would be beneficial to both parties?—To all parties; a manufacturer would then know all particulars, and would take them into calculation, the same as a builder, when he makes a contract to build a house; the price paid for labour is an element in his calculation; the builder takes that into consideration when he considers what he can execute an order for, and so would a manufacturer.

8388. Sir *H. Halford.*] The object of the Bill you speak of was to bring stoppages on account of frame-rent within the prohibitions of the Truck Act?—It is exactly the same thing; the Truck Act is an Act to prevent the stoppage of wages for goods; the object of this Act is to restrain the stoppage of wages for frame-rent and charges; the frame-rents and charges have nothing to do with wages; the wages are so much per dozen for the work, for making so many stockings; the wages are the remuneration for making, we will say, eight dozen men's stockings, at 1 *s.* 7 ½ *d.* per dozen; those are the wages;

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wages; it might be less; those are the earnings of the workman; they are his remuneration for making the stockings; that is wages; wages are the reward of labour; Scripture describes it as the neighbour's service; "using your neighbour's service"; wages are the reward of that service; the other is a distinct thing altogether. If I have a frame and let it to a man at a shilling a week, I, not being his employer, cannot stop his wages; why should an employer in the open market of the world prevent me from letting a frame? My remedy is only law; why should he have a better power, and stop the wages for it? He cannot stop goods from the wages.

8389. Sir *H. Halford.*] What, in your opinion, would be the effect, supposing that Bill were passed into a law?—The effect would be that each middleman would have only as many frames as he could find full work for; a manufacturer would not keep more frames in a middleman's hands than he had got full work for.

8390. What arrangement do you think would be made with regard to wages?—Less would be given per dozen where the employer or middleman finds the machinery; a penny more per dozen where he lets the man find his own machinery, or whatever the trade would calculate as their profit on that.

8391. *Chairman.*] The difference would be, that he would pay less in the first instance, instead of paying the whole sum and then making a deduction from it?—He would pay so much per dozen; there would be no deduction at all.

8392. Suppose you took 1 *s.* instead of 1 *d.*, instead of paying 8 *s.* now, and then deducting 1 *s.* off that for rent, he would, where he allowed the workman to use his frames, pay him at such a rate as would give him only 7 *s.* wages?—You are taking totals, which is not the correct way; we must take it per dozen; instead of giving a man 1 *s.* a dozen, letting him make either four, five, six, seven, or eight dozen, he would give him 11 *d.* for every dozen he made on the employer's machinery, the employer finding it, and he would give him 1 *s.* a dozen for every dozen he made in his (the workman's) own frame. Therefore it rests with the employer at all times as to what quantity he will give a man; if, giving him net wages, he gives him only a dozen, he gets 11 *d.*, or if he has two dozen, he gets 1 *s.* 10 *d.*, or if he has three dozen, he gets 3 *s.* 9 *d.*; but by stopping a certain fixed amount of 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a week for frame-rents and charges, it resting with the employer at all times as to the quantity he will give him, if he only gives 3 ½ dozen to make, and stops 3 *s.* 6 *d.* from that 3 ½ dozen, the man gets nothing.

8393. Mr. *Biggs.*] The new law, you admit, would create two prices?—As it does in all trades; if I pay a man for printing in my press, I give him so much a token less than I should give him if he printed with his own press; the same thing applies to all machinery.

8394. You admit that it would reduce wages?—No; it would reduce the price per dozen; but a man would make more, and therefore get more at the end of the week; because if I have only 1 *s.* a dozen, and the employer finds me all the work I can do, and I make 14 dozen, I then get 14 *s.*; and therefore I get more than I should if he were giving me 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen, and limiting me to just as much as he chose to give me; when he does that I get less wages, though nominally I am paid a higher price.

8395. Sir *H. Halford.*] You think it would create a fairer distribution than at present exists as between profits and wages?—No doubt; it would be proper and natural, according to the common law of the land. I will take my own case as a lawyer. I employ a man to write for me at a penny a folio, at my desk in my office, I finding him pens, ink, paper, desk, and everything. I give that quantity of writing out to a clerk, that is, to a law stationer, who does it at his own house; that man is a middleman, in fact; he does the work at three-halfpence a folio; of course there are two prices there, but then it is profit and loss; it is commensurate.

8396. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have stated yourself to be an attorney, at Derby?—Yes.

8397. Have you any other occupation?—No.

8398. You devote a good deal of your time, do you not, to the agitation of the question of stoppages from wages?—I do devote and have devoted a great deal of my time to it, with a view to get every man the payment of his wages without stoppages.

8399. Derby, I think, is the head-quarters of that agitation?—With me.

8400. And

8400. And your house is the rendezvous of the complainants, is it not?—I do not know that. I have no other motive for taking the part I have taken on this question, but that which I have stated.

8401. Your house, however, is the rendezvous of the complainants, is it not?—No.

8402. Is this published by you: "All subscriptions to be sent to, and inquiries made of, the Chairman of the Universal Anti-Truck Society, Mr. Jeremiah Briggs, 28, Iron Gate, Derby"?—That is my office.

8403. Are you officially connected with any society for the protection of labour?—Only that one.

8404. Only which one?—I call it the National Labour Alliance; they are both the same; the object of it is merely to get the wages of labour paid without stoppages; I have no other motive.

8405. They are both the same society?—Yes; I call it sometimes the "Wages without Stoppage Society."

8406. The society goes under different *aliases*?—There is no *alias* at all. "Universal Anti-Truck" is the same thing; the object is that there shall be no stoppage from what a man earns by the goods he manufactures, or that there shall be no stoppage for frame rents or charges, or fines, or any deductions.

8407. Do you derive any benefit from your connexion with that society?—None whatever; at present it is a great loss to me.

8408. You do not derive any benefit from it, either as an individual or as a professional man?—No; I get nothing except what I collect by subscriptions; the subscriptions are paid over to me.

8409. What are the objects of the association?—It is an association formed for the purpose of obtaining the payment of wages without stoppages.

8410. Has it any other objects in view?—No; in fact, it is universal anti-truck; I have no other object; I care for nothing else.

8411. Do you not include fines?—Yes, any stoppages from wages; fines and frame rents; in short, any deductions from wages.

8412. I thought you had said that you have no objection to the enforcement of fines for defective work?—No; I said that there should be no stoppage from wages, save and except for disputed and bad workmanship. Either party, of course, if he is dissatisfied, is at liberty to go before the magistrates; it is possible that a workman may say it is not bad work, when the employer says it is; and under those circumstances I think it would not be right to allow the employer to put a penalty on the workman by stopping a part of his wages.

8413. Cannot a man go before a magistrate now, in case of a disputed fine?—No.

8414. Not in case of a disputed fine; are you sure of that?—If his employer does not pay his wages, he is at liberty to go before a magistrate; the magistrates at Derby will not allow a fine to be stopped from his wages, but in other places they will. There are no fines in the hosiery; at least, I know of none.

8415. One object of your society is to prevent fines from being levied, is it not?—It is to prevent all stoppages, either in the shape of fines or frame rents; in fact, any deductions whatsoever. I go upon these words, that "the hireling is not to be oppressed in his wages."

8416. *Chairman.*] But a fine for bad work would not be oppression, would it?—No; but there are no fines for bad work; in the case of bad work, the workman does not earn wages: for instance, if I give a man out to write for me 10 sheets of paper, and he brings them in to me spoiled, he has not earned wages for that, and therefore there is nothing due to him. Stoppages for fines are, in cases where they will fine a man for neglect, or for absence; but then that is not so in the hosiery. I have known a man go home and bury his father, who has earned 11*s.*, and when he has come back, he has been fined 8*s.* for absence; but that does not apply to the hosiery.

8417. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you chairman of the association to which I have referred?—Yes.

8418. And are you treasurer also?—Yes.

8419. Are there any other officers connected with the association?—Yes, there was a meeting on the 8th July 1851, at my office, and several parties came; there was an advertisement put into the newspaper for the purpose of forming the association, and various parties attended accordingly at my office. From that time everything has been left in my hands; I have literally done everything.

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8420. Mention, if you please, the names of some other persons connected with the origin of that association?—When the meeting took place, Mr. Thomas Winters came down from London; he was one; there was a gentleman who came from Dudley, and Greaves, the last witness, was one from Derby.

8421. Are you sure you are right in saying that; because Mr. Greaves distinctly told me that he had no connexion with any association?—But he was present at that meeting.

8422. I want to know who the other officers are of that association?—I have told you there is no one; I do everything.

8423. You are the only officer of the association; is that so?—Yes.

8424. Mr. *Mundy.*] These other persons were present, you say, at the meeting to which you have referred?—Yes; when there is a meeting at Nottingham, I go and attend it; if they call a meeting at Leicester I go and attend it; and if any of them think proper to come to Derby, they come there.

8425. Mr. *Gardner.*] Who are your correspondents in Leicester?—Messrs. Buckby and Elliott, and a Mr. John Holt, at Nottingham; then as to Melbourne, I believe that now there are no stockingers left there; the place is completely ruined.

8426. What are the terms of membership to this association, and the number of your members?—Anything they like to give, and any number that will come to it.

8427. Do the subscriptions and donations to the association pass through your hands?—Yes; I receive all they pay, and if any one else will do it I will give it up, and be thankful.

8428. Do you publish accounts of your receipts and expenditure?—I have published accounts, and I have offered them to any one who wishes to see them; any one can see all the monies I have received, and what I have paid away.

8429. Have you made a public announcement to that effect?—Yes.

8430. Will you state where you have announced it?—In one of these little "Advocates" that I have published (*referring to a small pamphlet*).

8431. *Chairman.*] Is the "Advocate" a periodical publication?—No; it was intended to be a periodical publication, but it never got to that for want of funds. I recollect publishing this (*referring to the pamphlet*): "Received 10*s.*; 1*l.*; 2*l.*; 1*l.*; 1*l.*, and 2*l.*;" in all 7*l.* 10*s.* I paid for 1,000 pamphlets 1*l.* 18*s.* I had paid 20*l.*, and received 7*l.* 10*s.* when I published this. The sums I have mentioned, were sums which I received from different gentlemen who gave a sovereign, and so on.

8432. Mr. *Gardner.*] How much do you account for there?—Seven pounds ten shillings; those were the first sums that I received. I can tell you who I received them from, if you wish it.

8433. Then you have not received more on account of this Universal Anti-Truck Society than 7*l.* 10*s.*?—No; but you asked me whether I ever published an account, and I say, Yes, I published this; that was the first.

8434. You account for 7*l.* 10*s.*?—I received 7*l.* 10*s.*, and expended 20*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.*; that was when we first began.

8435. And, as to the rest of the accounts, where are they?—They are at my office; I will show every account, and every letter I have received on the subject, if I am desired to do so.

8436. The question I asked you was, whether you ever made a public announcement to that effect?—Yes; this is the first account I published, and since then I have not made any printed public announcement.

8437. My question was, whether you had publicly announced that you did publish accounts of your receipts and expenditure?—You asked me whether I ever had published such an account, and I said, Yes.

8438. I asked you whether it was your habit to do so?—The first one I did was this: "I beg to explain the situation of my cash account, to show that want of money has not compelled me to relinquish the cause of the poor workmen, nor will want of funds or even prejudice debar me from doing good when it lies in my power."

8439. What was the date of that statement?—I cannot tell you, but I dare say it was the very first after the meeting.

8440. When was that?—In 1851.

8441. What time in 1851?—I should say it was about May 1851; it was after our first meeting, four years ago. I tell you that, if any one calls upon me, he

he is quite welcome to see how I account for every penny I have received, but latterly I have not published any account of what monies I have received.

8442. Have you had any demand or request for your accounts from any member of your society?—Not one but what I have answered when I have been asked; I have told them all particulars.

8443. Mr. *Gardner.*] What is the state of your association as to numbers, as compared to what was at its commencement?—I cannot tell you the numbers, because there is no one paying to it now; any one who wishes to come to it comes; for instance, if a man feels aggrieved he comes to me, and he pays nothing.

8444. Lord *J. Manners.*] You are the association, in fact?—If they come to me I do the best I can for them; what I get I get by subscriptions.

8445. *Chairman.*] You get it rather in the way of donations, do you not, than subscriptions?—Yes; there are no annual subscriptions; I have nothing to conceal.

8446. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean to tell me that you do not know at present what the number of members is belonging to this Anti-Truck Association?—I do, because I have no members paying. A person will come to me with a grievance; I get him his wages if I can; after I have done that the man perhaps will say, "I will give 1 *s.* or something to help towards the association;" and sometimes they will write and say, "Sir, I beg to enclose you 1 *s.* towards the expenses you have been at;" and sometimes a sovereign will come in a letter.

8447. *Chairman.*] Without payment, is there any enrolment of a member?—No; they are unable to pay.

8448. Mr. *Gardner.*] But you have subscriptions?—Donations, not subscriptions.

8449. Have you never had subscriptions?—No, nothing annually; I may have had a person who has sent to say, "Sir, I enclose 1 *s.* as my subscription," and I have never heard from him since.

8450. Is this a true statement: "The subscriptions already kindly sent are as follows: Sir Henry Halford, Bart., M. P., 1 *l.*; the Marquis of Granby, M. P., 2 *l.*; the Lord Bishop of Lincoln, 2 *l.*; Lawrence Heyworth, M. P., 1 *l.*; William Mundy, M. P., 1 *l.*, and the Earl of Stanhope, 2 *l.*?—Yes, those are donations which have been sent me.

8451. *Chairman.*] But you call them subscriptions, in the hope of their being repeated?—That is it.

8452. Mr. *Gardner.*] When were these donations made?—Up to the beginning of last year; I should say during the first three years.

8453. They are discontinued now?—Partly discontinued.

8454. Sir *H. Halford.*] They are not subcriptions?—No; they are donations to aid to get wages without stoppages; I should say that I believe I have not had a sovereign this year.

8455. Mr. *Gardner.*] We have had before us a vast number of printed documents, handbills, and so on, and I have been in the habit of receiving various papers relating to Leicester, among which there have been a vast number of documents printed, and otherwise signed by you; I want to know at whose expense all these pamphlets and periodicals are published?—At my own.

8456. The funds of the association, if association it can be called, do not cover the expenses incurred?—No, nothing like it.

8457. The expenses you represent to come out of your own private pocket?—Yes, in that action of Chawner's, which was tried, and in which my bill was 235 *l.*, the expenses came out of my pocket.

8458. Mr. *Cheetham.*] To what object do you devote these donations?—To printing circulars; to the expenses of petitions; the paper for petitions, and such other things as other societies would have. My object is simply to get wages without stoppages; I have no other motive, and no other idea; I have no political motive in the world.

8459. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you say that the "Labour Advocate" is in existence now?—When I think proper to publish it.

8460. Have these donations or subscriptions, or whatever you may please to call them, been devoted to the expenses of that "Labour Advocate"?—No, they have been devoted to the expenses of the cause; my expenses has been perhaps some hundreds, while my receipts have not been tens.

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8461. Do I understand you to deny, that the "National Labour Advocate" has received any benefit from these funds; has it paid its own expenses?—Certainly not, because I have printed it myself at my own expense; and I have sent it to a great many parties, and have never received a penny for it. I call it a "Penny Advocate."

8462. Have you applied the funds that you have received from time to time to the purposes of the "National Labour Advocate"?—Certainly not, because the funds are not sufficient to pay even the expense of the petition paper; for instance, I sent up a sum of money to Leicester to Buckby and Elliott when I received it, to get up their petition.

8463. You sent up a sum of money to them to get up a petition from the Leicester people?—Yes, I sent it to Buckby and Elliott; they said they were anxious to show to Parliament their grievance, and that they could not do so without a petition; therefore I provided them with petition paper, and with money to enable them to do it.

8464. Do you think that there is a strong feeling in Leicester in favour of the petition?—Yes.

8465. If so, do you not think that the people of Leicester could have raised among themselves, without aid from you, sufficient to pay the expenses attending getting up petitions?—They said they were so poor that they could not pay the expense, otherwise than by getting donations.

8466. I ask, first, whether you think there is a strong feeling in Leicester upon this subject?—There is; and they are so poor that they could not find so much per frame to get up a petition; I sent them, in the first instance, 5*l.*, and in the second instance, I sent them 2*l.*; at any time when they have wanted money, I have sent it to them; rather than it should be said that I wanted the money, I would myself provide it.

8467. What was the total expense of getting up the petition from Leicester, do you think?—I cannot tell, for they have not rendered me an account.

8468. How much did you send them for that purpose?—Seven pounds.

8469. Would the expenses be 20*l.*, do you think?—I cannot tell what they will charge; I only know this, that if they had permitted me to have got up that petition in the way I should have done it, I should simply have paid a man for collecting signatures, and that would not have amounted to 20*l.*

8470. How do you reconcile your statement, that there is a strong feeling in Leicester upon the subject, with the fact that the sum of 20*l.* could not be raised for the legitimate purpose of preparing and sending up a petition to Parliament?—I cannot say; they say they are so poor that when Saturday night comes, and they come to reckon up what they have done, it happens sometimes that some of them have no wages to receive, while others have to receive 1*s.*, and others 1*s.* 6*d.*

8471. Are you the proprietor of the "Labour Advocate"?—Yes, I am the proprietor and editor.

8472. You are responsible, then, for this statement which appears in it, namely, "60,000 poor framework-knitters are now working for nothing but rent and charges"?—Yes.

8473. Will you explain that statement?—I take it that 60,000 men are engaged in the stocking-making business; I take that to be the figure, from a book that I saw of the number; then every man, I believe, was paying frame rent and charges, and therefore every man was working for what was stopped in the first instance for nothing. Of course, until he earns enough to pay frame rents and charges he does not get a halfpenny, therefore every man was working for nothing except frame rents and charges, because until those frame rents and charges are paid he gets nothing.

8474. *Chairman.*] Is there any such qualification in the words which have been read?—No.

8475. Is it not the necessary inference that anybody would draw from reading that, and believing it, that these 60,000 men earn nothing but what goes to pay the frame rents and charges?—I have been told of that before, and I said immediately that that was not what I meant; it may be an error; I do not deny it.

8476. Mr. *Gardner.*] Since you have been told that a misconception had arisen with reference to the interpretation of this statement which admits of only one interpretation, as any man of education must at once perceive, have

you

you altered or in any way modified that statement?—I have not had any occasion to republish it.

8477. *Chairman.*] Have you published any number of the "Advocate" since then?—I believe not.

8478. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you consider the statement to be true, that "60,000 poor framework-knitters are now working for nothing but rent and charges"?—Until the frame rent is paid for they do; I consider that every man until he has paid the frame rent and charges works for nothing.

8479. Do you tell us, as a lawyer and a man of education, that, reading that statement, any such qualification as that which you now suggest can be legitimately inferred?—Certainly; perhaps I should not have expressed it quite so loosely. What I mean there to say is, that there is not a framework-knitter but what must first work for nothing; that is, he must pay his rent and charges before he gets any wages; if the employer gives him more work after he has done that, he then does get wages. My meaning is, that there is not a man who has worked who has not some week worked for nothing. I have put this question to a man: "Has there been any week when you have worked for nothing?" "Yes." Then I say, "Do you consider every man has at times worked for nothing?" "Undoubtedly," is the answer I have had.

8480. It must be evident to you that that is not what is conveyed by the statement to which I have referred?—It may be so.

8481. I have no doubt that, when you next publish a number of the "Advocate," you will feel it no more than your duty to set that right?—I should do so.

8482. Mr. *Biggs.*] How long ago is it since you made this statement, which is of a highly inflammatory character, and calculated, I must say, to excite a feeling not merely of disgust, but something worse than disgust, against the manufacturers who could act so tyrannically?—I never meant it to have such an effect.

8483. Perhaps not; but I want to know how long it is since that statement has been published?—That is the last that I published.

8484. How long is it since?—Before this year.

8485. You have been apprised of the construction that has been put upon it, have you not?—Buckby and Elliott told me of it.

8486. But you have not published any other statement, or made any correction of this?—No, I have not.

8487. Do you not think it was your duty, as a gentleman, to correct that statement, or publish some qualification of it, the moment you found what was the only construction that could reasonably be put upon it?—It did not occur to me to do it.

8488. Do you not think that such a statement as that is rather in the nature of a firebrand?—I did not so intend it; I never meant it to be a firebrand; I never meant to do anything, except to expose the system; it does not make me a firebrand, calling me one.

8489. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is your statement that 60,000 of the poor framework-knitters are now working for nothing but rent and charges, true or false?—Until they get——

8490. I must require you to give me a direct answer, yes or no, to the question; is that statement true or false?—I say this, that 60,000 framework-knitters, if there are 60,000, are now working for nothing but frame rents and charges until they are paid, but it is certainly not entirely the case that they are getting nothing else in the world; no man of common sense could suppose that that was intended.

8491. *Chairman.*] Your answer, then, is, that the statement is not true in the sense in which it is understood?—No, I meant to say that 60,000 framework-knitters are working for frame rents and charges till they are paid.

8492. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have been accused of being a firebrand; had you any object whatever in what you did, but that of making a legal and peaceful agitation?—None at all; and I did not wish even for agitation more than petitioning. I said, "If you want the law altered, petition for it."

8493. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to acknowledge the statement about the 60,000 framework-knitters to be false?—I am wrong as to the number, for I understand there are not more than 40,000 framework-knitters.

8494. But you continue to assert, that however many there may be, they are working

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working for nothing but frame rent and charges?—No, I withdraw that, and say that whatever number there are, they are working under the system of frame rent and charges.

8495. The other statement then, we are to understand, is false?—No.

8496. The statement, I mean, that they are working for nothing but frame rent and charges?—I will not say it is false; what I say is, that until they earn enough to pay the frame rents and charges, they get nothing; until they have earned more than the frame rent and charges; that was what I intended; I never intended more.

8497. Sir *H. Halford.*] You mean to signify, that the workmen are, during a part of their time, working for nothing but the frame rents and charges?—Certainly; their first earnings go for nothing but frame rents and charges; that is what I meant to convey.

8498. Mr. *Gardner.*] I understand you to correct your statement, and to make it stand thus; that there are so many framework-knitters now, working under a system of frame rent and charges?—My statement is, that there are a number of workmen working under frame rents and charges, and that till they have earned that amount they receive nothing; if the frame rent and charges amount to 3 *s.*, they must first earn that sum and more, before they can receive anything; that is what I meant.

8499. *Chairman.*] You said you wrote a letter to Buckby and Elliott, have you that letter?—I have not, nor their letter to me; but I have numerous letters; what I have referred to might or might not be in a letter, but I think it was; they wrote to me, and said I was in error as to the 60,000.

8500. Mr. *Cheetham.*] But after the receipt of that letter from them, you did not correct your statement?—One thousand numbers had been knocked off, and I think they have been distributed; but I have not knocked off another thousand.

8501. Have you issued no publication of any kind since that period?—No, the one you have in your hand was the last; one thousand copies of that were knocked off, and I have never knocked off any since; but if I do I will take the statement out altogether.

8502. Mr. *Gardner.*] You are of opinion, I believe, that most of the evils that afflict this country are caused by the stoppage system?—I think it is the root of all evil.

8503. Are you of opinion that cholera owes it origin to the stoppage system?—No; it has nothing to do with it.

8504. What do you say to the war with Russia; did that arise, in your opinion, in consequence of the stoppage system?—I believe that it has been sent as a punishment for the oppression that there is in wages; I may be wrong in taking that view, but at the same time I must say I believe it.

8505. Do you believe in this statement that you have put forward in the "Labour Advocate": "The war with Russia is the will of the Almighty, to bring down the despotism of the stoppage manufacturing employers into subjection to the laws of God"?—The system; not the individuals, but the system.

8506. Do you adhere to that statement?—I believe it.

8507. "It is to open the eyes of the nation, and to bring our rulers to a sense of the defenceless condition of the poor, arising from their want of the means of living; the stoppage system and the factory system have used up the people of England, and destroyed the growth of the poor;" do you adhere to those statements?—I believe in them.

8508. Are you practically acquainted with the cotton districts?—I am practically acquainted with letters and things that have been sent to me with regard to stoppages that have been made in the cotton districts; such as the rent that the weavers have to pay for their looms, and the fines that have been deducted from their wages. I am acquainted with children earning 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week, and 1 *s.* being stopped from each; there were four of them; that was because they were throwing water at each other in the factory yard. I am acquainted with fines and stoppages of that description; that is one reason why I want the law to be universal; that there shall be no stoppages from what a child earns.

8509. On what pretence do you make the following statement with respect to Manchester and England in general, and draw the inference you do? "In Manchester there are 1,500 unfortunate females, causing an annual expenditure of 470,000 *l.*; 250 of them die in horror and despair every year. In England, the land of Bibles and religion, there are 40,000 houses of ill fame, and 280,000 known

known prostitutes, which causes 8,000,000 *l.* annually to be spent in the midst of sin and misery. This horrid depravity comes of the unprincipled stoppage system of the manufacturing employers, in stopping the earnings of their work-people for fines, frame rents, and other illegal deductions, all of which leads to getting the labour of the poor for nothing, and forcing upon them poverty, sin, and crime. How can such manufacturers ever expect to open their eyes in heaven, when they close them to the misery of their defenceless dependants on earth?" Are those your statements?—Yes.

8510. And you adhere to them?—Yes.

8511. Are you aware that fines and deductions of all kinds are almost unknown in the cotton districts?—I am not.

8512. You are of opinion, then, that "This horrid depravity comes of the unprincipled stoppage system of the manufacturing employers"?—I believe that the stoppage system is the root of all evil; if a man or a child cannot have the earnings of their labour, how can they be anything but criminals and paupers?

8513. Do you think it becoming your position as a man of education and a gentleman, to put forward such statements as those before a number of poor and ignorant men whose wages are undoubtedly very low?—I have read stronger statements, written by parties who have put forward other claims.

8514. Can you refer us to any statements which contain stronger language than that which I have read?—The advocates of temperance have put forward stronger statements; those statements I copied out of a Manchester paper or a London paper, as the statistics of the community in Manchester.

8515. Do you think it becoming your position as a gentleman and a man of education, to assert that the war in which this country is now engaged with Russia is a visitation of the Almighty in consequence of the manufacturers in the hosiery trade carrying on their business in a manner which does not satisfy you?—No; I only go against the system; I speak of the system alone, I do not speak of the individuals who carry it on, because the individuals cannot help it. Employers themselves have told me that they cannot help it; they wish the system to be abolished, but they cannot help it.

8516. Do you say that employers have told you so?—Yes, persons at Derby; I recollect one person in particular who lived up in Grove-street; he has left Derby now; he said, "What can I do? I do not want to continue the system, but until it is altered by law we must abide by it."

8517. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you recognise and admit having written what I am now about to read, "The stoppage system has driven away by emigration the strength of England, for the stalwart and strong would not remain to be robbed by stoppages, of the earnings of their labour;" do you recognise that statement?—Yes; I know that people have emigrated; I have known individuals myself who, because they could not get a living through the stoppage system, have emigrated, and gone abroad.

8518. "God will be merciful to us and save us, if our rulers will but do justice to the poor, and give them the perfect law of liberty; a law for the payment of wages without stoppages, so that they may have what they earn, and deal with it as they like without being robbed of it by their employer, and their wages stolen from them by him for stoppages?"—I did write that; I believe it to be a stealing of wages. The Bible says, "Woe unto the man that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work."

8519. "The stoppage system has sent to an early grave thousands of the people and children of England who would now have been living, and healthy and strong, but for that inhuman stoppage system?"—I believe in that.

8520. The concluding paragraph to which your name is appended in this "National Labour Advocate" is to this effect: "The stoppage system makes the employer everything that is bad; it makes him an oppressor, a swindler, an enemy of God, and an enemy of the human race?"—I believe it makes the middleman that.

8521. You are the author of that?—Yes.

8522. And do you abide by it?—Yes, he is obliged to swindle the wages by stoppages; it is the system that I speak against. I do not say a word about the men who are obliged to act upon that system.

8523. Mr. *Gardner.*] You say that the system makes them swindlers?—They must be swindlers; they cannot help it.

8524. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are we to understand that, in your opinion, the manufacturers

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facturers of Derby, Nottingham, and Leicester are swindlers?—No; I say that the rent and charges system, when adopted, makes the employer a swindler; for instance, suppose a middleman having work for four frames spreads it over 16, at the end of the week the men would be in his debt, because, although he stopped all they earned, that would not be sufficient to pay the rent and charges; I call that man a swindler.

8525. Have you not stated, that to make a deduction for frame rent is stealing from wages?—Yes; wages are the remuneration for work, and if you stop any part of that, you must steal it.

8526. Have you not stated, that any deduction made for frame rent is a stealing of wages?—Yes.

8527. Are we to understand that, in your opinion, gentlemen who have appeared before this Committee as witnesses, Mr. Morley, of Nottingham; Mr. Ratcliffe, of Loughborough, and other parties, are robbers?—I say the system is a system of robbery.

8528. I want a direct answer to my question; are they, in your opinion, robbers?—No, they cannot help it; but if a man stops rent and charges from wages, all I say is, that, in my opinion, that is a robbery.

8529. My question applies to frame rents only; I ask whether, in your opinion, Mr. Morley, of Nottingham, for deducting the rent of his frames is a robber and a swindler?—No, he is not a robber and swindler; but the wages are the work, and if they are stopped the workmen are robbed.

8530. *Chairman.*] By whom are they robbed?—By the man who does it; but he cannot help it; the fault is in the system.

8531. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Mr. Morley having stated that he deducts frame rents, is, in your opinion, a robber?—I will not use that expression.

8532. Let me have an answer to my question, if you please?—I do not say that he is a robber.

8533. Will you explain that contradiction?—Mr. Morley, I am happy to say, does not, I am told, stop frame rent and charges, excepting where the men he employs have work.

8534. That is not an answer to my question?—I do not call Mr. Morley a robber.

8535. You said that you published in one of these documents a statement that the stoppage of frame rent was a stealing of wages; have you not stated that?—I say it is a stealing of wages.

8536. Then any party who deducts frame rents under any circumstances is a stealer of wages?—He certainly, putting it in that way, is a stealer of wages, taking the wages to be the earnings for the work done.

8537. Then if Mr. Morley has stopped frame rent from his workmen, he is a swindler and a robber?—No, he is not; I say that the system makes a man a swindler.

8538. Mr. *Biggs.*] I will call your attention to the concluding paragraph of the letter that appears in your "National Labour Advocate:" "The stoppage system makes the employer everything that is bad; it makes him an oppressor, a swindler, an enemy of God, and an enemy of the human race;" do you recognise and admit that?—Logically I do, but not otherwise.

8539. You are aware that that language necessarily applies to the manufacturers?—Or the middlemen.

8540. The manufacturers or middlemen, or both?—Yes.

8541. You mean to say that the manufacturers of Nottingham, Leicester, and Derby are everything that is bad; that they are oppressors and swindlers, enemies of God, and enemies of the human race; is that so?—No, I do not mean that; I mean that, logically, stopping from wages makes them so.

8542. What employers do you mean, if you do not mean the employers of the Midland Counties?—I mean that if they stop a man's earnings, that logically makes them swindlers; I do not say that they are swindlers; I have used the word "make;" it makes a man what he otherwise would not be; I meant no more than that.

8543. But, grammatically and logically construed, does not that, the language you use, mean that the manufacturers who act upon the system to which you allude are "everything that is bad, oppressors, and swindlers, enemies of God, and enemies of the human race"?—No, I say the system makes them so; whereas otherwise they would not be so.

8544. That

8544. That is saying, in other words, that they are so, is it not?—No; a manufacturer, as a manufacturer, does not mean to be a swindler, or anything of the kind; but there is a system that may logically make him so against his will.

8545. Do you wish to retract the statement to which I have referred in the sense in which it reads?—I say that the system makes him so.

8546. Do you regret having used such strong language?—If it is offensive to any one, I do.

8547. Mr. *Gardner.*] But do you believe it to be true?—I believe that the system makes a man what he otherwise would not be; but I never meant an insult to any man individually.

8548. Mr. *Biggs.*] If the system makes him so, he evidently is so if he adopts the system; any employer who adopts the system at this present time must be, in your opinion, what you here designate him?—No, the system may make him so; all I meant to speak against was the system.

8549. But you make no exception here?—Then I will make an exception now, if I can. I may not have done so there; but I say the system makes a man do what he otherwise would not do.

8550. Do you think that the employment of any such extremely strong language can be useful to any cause?—I should say not.

8551. Then may we understand it to be your wish, as a gentleman, that you had not made use of these expressions?—If they are offensive to any man.

8552. Sir *H. Halford.*] Your observations were directed, were they not, against the system, and not against individuals?—Yes; it has actually made many persons, the middlemen particularly, very oppressive, when otherwise they would not be so.

8553. Are you aware that some of the manufacturers themselves object to the system exceedingly?—I am; many of the manufacturers object to the system, and wish it abolished. I believe that the system is contrary to the Word of God; that the wages of work are to be paid to the workman. It is said, "Woe unto him that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work"; that is why I use those expressions, and I use them only in that way; that if a man stops for frame rent and charges more than a man earns, he does not give him for his work. If the expressions I have used have been offensive to any manufacturer, or any other person, I am sorry for it.

8554. Mr. *Biggs.*] I think you have told us that the passing of an Act of Parliament to put down frame rents and charges would lead to two prices, one a price to those working independent frames, and one a price to those working manufacturers' frames; is that your opinion?—Yes, there would be two prices per dozen.

8555. Do you think that that would be an improvement?—Yes.

8556. Would it not lead, do you think, to further reductions in wages?—No.

8557. If it were discontinued, would the workmen be so continuously employed as they are now?—Yes, because an employer would not leave his frame idle if he could help it.

8558. Is not the inducement of rent a link between the manufacturer and the workman, to the benefit of the workman?—No, far from it. I will instance that in this way: in Melbourne there are 21 frame-work knitters, 11 silk glove hands, and three plain hose hands; the ribbed hands are getting the lowest earnings I ever heard tell of. I found two of them making half-hose socks, namely, one man making the plain foot part, the other man making the ribbed ankle part, at 1 *s.* 6 *d.* each a dozen; they have to work very hard to make three dozen a week, which is 4 *s.* 6 *d.* a week each (warehouse price), from which they are stopped as follows: frame rent, 18-gauge, 10 *d.*; machine rent, 1 *d.*; seaming, 6 *d.*; needles, 2 *d.*; leaving only 2 *s.* 11 *d.* for a man's week's work when fully employed; when out of work, he has to go to the parish, or tramp in the streets a-begging. No alteration of the law can make a man in a worse condition than that.

8559. You do not speak to that case from your own knowledge?—Yes, I do, because a letter came to me from a man at Melbourne.

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8560. Were there no qualifying circumstances in that case?—No; that is how it came to me.

8561. Does it follow from its coming to you that it is true?—Yes; because I inquired into it from a man who came from there.

8562. Is it a common case, do you think, or an exceptional case?—A common case; and the consequence is, that they are entirely broken up at Melbourne.

8563. Do you think they get but 3*s.* a week?—In this case, making at 1*s.* 6*d.* a dozen.

8564. Would you dispense with middlemen?—No, there is no necessity for that.

8565. How would you pay a middleman?—The same as a law stationer.

8566. Explain how you would pay him?—I would give him so much a dozen, he employing the men and finding the machinery; or, if he did not find the machinery, he should have so much less per dozen.

8567. You would have the warehouse price and the middleman's price?—Yes.

8568. Do you think that would be an improvement?—Certainly.

8569. Are you aware that that is strongly objected to by the workmen?—I have been to Nottingham and Leicester, and all the workmen I have met with have told me that they thought it would be a good thing for them; that they are paid so much a dozen net for their work more if they find their own frame, and less if the middleman or employer finds the frame.

8570. Do you not think it likely that if there were one price given at the warehouse, and another by the middleman, it would lead to great confusion and irregularity?—None whatever.

8571. Would it not be likely to reduce wages indefinitely?—No; the employers would get more work from the men, and the men would get more wages.

8572. A workman now always knows the price at the warehouse, does he not?—Yes; but they do not know what they will receive, because they are uncertain, when the week ends, what the middleman will deduct for frame rents and charges.

8573. But the fact of their knowing the price at the warehouse is a source of satisfaction to the working men at present, is it not?—It is no satisfaction if a man, when he comes to settle for his work on Saturday night, gets nothing; what satisfaction can it be to know what the price given at the warehouse is when he himself gets nothing?

8574. Is it not a satisfaction to him to know that the warehouse gives so much, and that he gets the warehouse price?—I do not know that it is any satisfaction to him; I do not know one way or the other. I have heard men say that when they have got nothing, the warehouse has been giving so much a dozen; that I have heard. You are aware that the poor rates at Leicester are awful where the stoppage system exists; at Derby, where it does not, they are nothing; I have discovered that.

8575. Mr. *Cobbett.*] When you say they are nothing, you do not mean to say they are absolutely nothing?—I pay perhaps two books of 6*d.* each for my rate.

8576. It is comparatively low then?—Comparatively low. I find it stated here (*referring to a pamphlet*), that at Leicester, ending in March 1847, the number of in-door paupers was 812, and the out-door 10,980. At Derby, ending March 1847, the number of in-door was 227, and the number of out-door 885.

8577. At the same time?—At the same time.

8578. Do you ascribe the poverty prevailing at Leicester, then, to the existence of the system of frame rents and charges?—No; I ascribe it to the stopping of wages for frame rents and charges.

8579. That is the same thing, is it not?—No.

8580. Do you ascribe the prosperity of Derby, at the same time, to the absence of frame rents and charges?—To the absence of any stoppages for wages in the different employments in Derby; for instance, in March 1848, at Leicester,

Leicester, the in-door was 1,124, and the out-door 15,988; at Derby, ending March 1848, the number of in-door was 434, and out-door 1,575, for the half year.

8581. *Chairman.*] Were those individuals?—Those were the numbers of paupers receiving parish relief for the half-year. I have this from the parish returns made to the Poor-law Board.

8582. Mr. *Biggs.*] What you have cited, only proves that there was great depression of trade at Leicester at that period, and great distress among the working population there?—It was the same at Derby, but it did not operate as the stoppage system does at Leicester.

8583. Do you ascribe that state of distress and pauperism to a want of employment, or to frame rents and charges?—When they are slack of work, the men will work for nothing but frame rents and charges, and then they will fall on the parish; when there is slack work at Derby, that system does not operate, because it is not in existence. I was a guardian at Leicester, and men would come for relief in thousands; we were obliged to relieve them, though we had no right to do so, when they were doing a little work. I asked many a man, "What have you earned?" Perhaps he would say 3*s.* 6*d.* "Where are your earnings?" And he would say, "I have no earnings." "What has become of them?" "They are stopped for frame rent and charges." "You want relief?" "Yes." "We have no right to give you relief;" but we were compelled to give relief; we had not a house to hold them; the consequence was, that in slack times, men would work for nothing but frame rents and charges; they did not get anything for their work; it is worse in slack times.

8584. Mr. *Cobbett.*] But how do they live under such circumstances?—On the parish; in the half-year ending March 1848, there were 1,124 inside the house, and 15,988 outside the house; that is, receiving out-door relief.

8585. Mr. *Biggs.*] What was the state of trade at the same time at Derby?—Bad; everything was bad in those times; things were excessively dear.

8586. But things were not so bad there as they were in Leicester?—No.

8587. And you ascribe that to the difference in the mode of carrying on the business?—Yes; there is no stoppage system to the same extent at Derby.

8588. We had a witness here this morning who said that there were two or three modes of carrying on business there, one being the Leicester mode, that of frame rents and charges; how do you account for that?—At Derby there are very few, I think not 200; but in the other manufactures, trades, and callings, the men receive their wages without stoppages.

8589. Do you know that the system of frame rents and charges is an old system, and that it was acted upon upwards of a century ago?—I should say it came from the ceasing of the last war, in 1814.

8590. It existed, did it not, anterior to that time?—Not to any extent; up to the time of the war men owned their own frames, lived in villages, and had no rent to pay; they made stockings, and sold them to the hosiers. After the war the soldiers became unemployed, and wanted to make stockings; they had no frames of their own; they applied to a manufacturer for a frame; he then put on the 6*d.* for frame rent to be stopped from the wages, and that has increased till you see it has become oppressive; but when there is plenty of work it is not so oppressive.

8591. Before the time you speak of, had not the hosiers in Leicester frames of their own?—No doubt they had, though I cannot recollect it.

8592. Did they not take rent for those frames?—Not to the extent they do now.

8593. Were there not middlemen then?—Yes, but not to the same extent that there are now.

8594. Then frame rents and charges existed at a time when trade was prosperous as well as when it was adverse?—Yes, but not to the same extent.

8595. Have you not seen, in years of considerable prosperity, workmen fully employed and apparently content, the price of provisions being low, and there being general prosperity?—I recollect a time when men were more fully employed than they are now, but I never recollect Leicester in a state of prosperity.

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8596. If that is so, it only shows that you are not very conversant with the state of Leicester, for there have been such periods, and during those periods this frame rent and charges system has been pursued; if, then, the system of frame rents and charges has been acted on during years of prosperity and adversity, is it fair to charge the adversity upon the system of frame rents and charges?—Leicester, to my knowledge, has never been in a state of prosperity; at Derby, 27 *l.* or 30 *l.* pays for the relief of the poor during the week; we have no able-bodied poor, and have not had since I have been at Derby. Leicester has always, through this stoppage system, in times of prosperity, 3,000 at least of paupers, or perhaps I should say 2,000. Leicester is not in a state of prosperity, nor has it ever been in such a state to my knowledge; what I mean by that is, when the people are so well off with the wages they receive for their work that they are not driven to the parish.

8597. *Chairman.*] According to you, Leicester has not at any period been in that condition as to all its manufactures?—No; Leicester has never been in a state of prosperity, as compared with other towns.

8598. Mr. *Gardner.*] You assume that there are no other circumstances connected with the trade of Leicester to account for the impoverished condition of the workmen except the mode in which wages are paid?—The stoppage system; how are you to reduce the poor rates of Leicester unless you put an end to that system.

8599. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you know that in the hosiery trade there have been great improvements made within a recent period in machinery?—Yes; and so there have been in machines used for printing.

8600. Wide frames and round frames have superseded to a great extent the employment of narrow frames, have they not?—Yes.

8601. They have competed with the narrow frames?—Yes.

8602. And the effect has been to reduce the wages of labour, has it not?—No improved machinery reduces the wages of labour if a man is paid for his work; when a printer is employed on improved machinery and is paid for his work, the printer's wages are not reduced. The result of introducing new machinery is, that the workman and the employer produce more goods, and the employer gets more profit; if a hosier employs a man, he, if he is paid for his work, gets whatever that work comes to; if one man works for half a day, he is paid for that work; another man perhaps will work a whole day, and he gets double.

8603. Lord *J. Manners.*] Take the case of an improved plough, for instance; if a man invents an improved plough, does it follow that the wages of the man who follows the plough will be lowered?—No; on the contrary, they would be increased.

8604. Mr. *Biggs.*] If a man can make six stockings at once on a wide frame, cannot he afford to make stockings at less wages than he can make for with a narrow frame?—No; in an improved machine he may make more for his employer; a man may be unemployed in the case of improved machinery, and may seek employment elsewhere; but improved machinery does not destroy the workman's wages.

8605. *Chairman.*] But it requires less human labour, does it not?—Yes.

8606. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you mean to say that when one farmer takes a new and improved plough, and another retains and clings to the old plough, they will both remain in the same condition?—The man employed on the improved plough will get better wages than the man employed on the old plough.

8607. Mr. *Gardner.*] What becomes of the man who works on the old plough; what is his condition?—It is bettered.

8608. How is his condition bettered?—The man has his wages paid for his week's work, whether he is able to do double or less than the proper quantity; it does not destroy the earnings of that man's labour; he is not able to do for his employer as much as he would do if he had a new machine, but that is the employer's fault.

8609. Will the employer pay him the same wages as he will pay a man who does double the quantity of work with an improved machine?—Certainly.

8610. What

8610. What is the use, then, of the improved machine?—The employer can do more with the aid of one man with an improved machine, than he can with an old one.

8611. *Chairman.*] The farmer would pay wages to one man only, and the other man would have to seek other employment?—Yes; but it would not reduce the wages of the one that worked.

8612. Lord *J. Manners.*] The object of the farmer in employing the new machinery is to produce a greater quantity of corn, is it not?—Yes.

8613. He gets his profit in the increased production from the soil?—Yes; it does not reduce the wages of the man who was employed to work it.

8614. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Has it no effect upon the wages of the man who clings to the old machinery?—Not to lower his wages; it may throw him out of employment.

8615. Is not that the effect of it?—If one of my clerks is thrown out of employment, I do not give my other clerk less wages.

8616. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose some circumstance occurred which induced you to dismiss one of your clerks when there was a general depression amongst lawyers, would not that have a tendency to reduce wages?—Not at all; do you think that if a tradesman dismisses his shopman that reduces wages.

8617. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If a man finds the market full, does he not offer his work for less?—If he is in a manufacture where the system is a system of stoppages, but not without.

8618. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think that the wages of men who drive horses in public conveyances are as large as they were in the old coaching times?—Certainly not.

8619. To what is that owing?—To the railways; but the men employed get the same amount of wages for their day's work, though they are not employed to the same extent.

8620. You think they do get the same wages?—Yes.

8621. My question is, do you think that the wages of persons employed in driving carriages drawn by horses, and conveying the public by that means, are as large as they used to be before the time of railways?—I see nothing to the contrary.

8622. Is it your opinion that they are as large as they were then?—My opinion is, that railways have had no effect on their wages except that of throwing men out of employment, and obliging them to seek employment elsewhere.

8623. A stage-coachman then, you think, gets as much as he used to in old times, before the time of railways?—He gets more; because it is necessary to give him more now.

8624. Mr. *Biggs.*] You are aware, are you not, of the introduction of power-looms within the last few years?—Yes.

8625. And that they have superseded, to a great extent, handloom weaving?—I suppose they have.

8626. Can you state why?—Because they can make, with the assistance of a power-loom, a greater quantity of goods with less manual labour.

8627. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What effect had that upon the wages of the hand-loom weavers?—The effect was to throw them out of employ.

8628. Did it not reduce their wages?—No; the stoppage system reduced their wages, because they stopped loom-rents, and even for power-looms; in some places they do so now.

8629. Upon what information do you say that the wages of handloom weavers did not fall when handlooms came into competition with steam looms; you said they did not; I ask you, upon what ground you make that statement; I asked you, whether the effect of the introduction of steam looms was not to reduce the wages of those who cling to the handlooms?—No.

8630. Upon what grounds do you give that reply?—It arises from other causes, and not from the use of improved machinery.

8631. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Are you speaking of any particular district?—I am not; I am only asked the question in a general way, whether improved machinery lowers the wages of the operatives employed.

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8632. Mr. *Cheetham.*] No, that was not the question; the question I asked you was, upon what ground you denied that the wages of the handloom weaver had not fallen when the handloom came in competition with the power-loom?—I said that the wages of the party employed in the power-loom had not fallen, but that the others were unemployed.

8633. I was alluding to the handloom, and I asked you if one of the effects of the introduction of the power-loom had not been to reduce the wages of the handloom weaver as well as to throw numbers of people out of employ, and you said it had not reduced the wages?—The man who clings to the use of the handloom against the power-loom must, of course, go to the wall.

8634. Mr. *Biggs.*] Will you be good enough to explain why?—Because he cannot, of course, with the handloom make the same quantity as he can with the power-loom; but if he is employed on improved machinery, his wages are not reduced; of course, if a man gets no employment, he must become a pauper.

8635. *Chairman.*] There is an intermediate state of things: a man who gets no employment must, of course, go to another calling; but a man may cling at an inferior rate of wages, to the employment at which he is expert, though he may not get so much as he got before?—He may work for less, and get less; for instance, in a power-loom a man may have 6 *d.* for making so many dozen, and yet may get more sixpences than a man who does the work by hand, though he may be paid at a much higher rate per dozen.

8636. You admit that it has the effect, necessarily, of reducing the earnings of the man who clings to the old machinery?—It has the effect of reducing what he can earn; but it has no effect upon the price.

8637. Do you consider that the wages depend upon the rate paid per dozen?—I consider the wages depend on what a man can earn during the week; one may earn more than another in the course of the week.

8638. Mr. *Biggs.*] What do you think is the tendency of the improved machinery; is the effect of it to cheapen production or not?—Improved machinery will cheapen the article; it will make it cheaper because it produces more; of course you can sell each individual article at a less price.

8639. The tendency of it is to increase production?—Yes.

8640. And consumption?—Yes.

8641. And to increase employment?—It may increase employment if there is a purchasing power; but a man should not make what he has not a sale for.

8642. Are men in their senses likely to do so long?—Yes; they do do it.

8643. Is not the tendency of improved machinery to displace the old and imperfect machines?—No doubt.

8644. And when there is competition between new improved machinery and old machinery, there is a gradual reduction of wages, is there not?—The reduction of wages is not caused by the use of improved machinery, but by the stoppage system.

8645. Is not the tendency of the competition between the improved machinery and the old narrow frames to reduce the wages of those who work in the old frames?—I should say not.

8646. Are not the wages of those who work in the old frames reduced?—They are, because of the stoppage system.

8647. Do not the workmen employed on the narrow, old, imperfect frames get the smallest wages in Leicestershire?—No.

8648. Do not the men employed on the most improved machinery in the town get the best wages?—I am told they do.

8649. Then, why do the people who are employed in the old, narrow frames get inferior wages to those who work in the other frames?—They do not get inferior wages, but they do not get so much wages. Suppose it is 1 *s.* a dozen, an old man can only earn 5 *s.* for his week's work; a stronger man may earn 10 *s.*, but that is not lessening the wages; the wages are the same, only one man earns more than another.

8650. *Chairman.*] It is only a quibble of words; he gets one price for his goods, but he makes fewer of them in the week?—They each get the same price, but one man makes more than another.

8651. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Your name has been mentioned by a witness who was examined on a former day, in connexion with the mode of getting petitions signed; did you employ anybody at any time to go to Nottingham to get signatures to petitions?—Yes.

8652. Who was it that you employed?—I employed three; Butterworth, and a person of the name of Smith, and another.

8653. Upon what terms did you employ them; what were they to do?—I generally gave them a farthing a signature for their labour.

8654. And what were their instructions?—Their instructions were to ask only for the *bonâ fide* signatures, from door to door, of persons who wished the payment of wages without stoppages.

8655. Had either of these persons been employed in the same way before?—I cannot say; there was a party of the name of Brownson who came to me, and he, I believe, was employed at another town, in either overlooking petitions or getting them up, or something of that kind.

8656. For whom?—That was at Manchester.

8657. For whom?—I do not know; I suppose for the Anti-Corn Law League.

8658. Did he tell you so?—He told me that he had been employed in getting up petitions.

8659. At Manchester?—Yes.

8660. To get signatures to petitions?—I do not know whether it was to overlook them or to get them signed; all I know is, that he said he was up to the business; he said that he had been employed by the League, and I told him I would give him a farthing a signature.

8661. Did you tell him that, before he mentioned the price himself?—I think he asked a halfpenny.

8662. Did he tell you he ever got a halfpenny?—I cannot say whether he did or not, or whether he only asked me a halfpenny.

8663. Who was he speaking of when he spoke of having been formerly employed in the same way?—The Anti-Corn Law League.

8664. Did you understand from him, that he had received a halfpenny a signature from the Anti-Corn Law League, and thereupon did you agree to employ him?—I cannot say; he came to me and said, he was up to the business, and I said, "Then you are just the man I want for obtaining signatures."

8665. Were these petitions adopted at any meeting?—There was a meeting at Nottingham where the petition was adopted; the petition at Leicester I did not draw up; there have been a variety of petitions; the last petition was a general petition "for the payment of wages without stoppages"; that was the heading put at the top of the petition; a printed copy of it was annexed to the sheet, and those parties who really thought such a law ought to pass were asked to sign, but I was very anxious that none but those who wished it *bonâ fide* should sign the petition, because I had to pay a farthing for each signature. I have heard something about Heanor; now Heanor is a place where there is a good deal of truck going on, because I have convicted parties there for paying wages in goods, and they have had to pay the penalty.

8666. You do not know whether the petitions were adopted at any meeting then, that you sent these men out with?—No, not exactly.

8667. Did you draw them up yourself?—Yes; it was a petition "for the payment of wages without stoppages;", that was how it was headed.

8668. You sent these persons out to procure signatures?—I did.

8669. And among other places, did you send the petition to Nottingham?—I did.

8670. To what sort of persons were they to apply?—They were to apply from door to door to save time and trouble, taking the petition with them; and it was written on the paper, that those who were anxious to sign the petition would please to do so, and as to those that would not, they were to come away, and not solicit them further.

8671. The signatures were not confined to stocking-makers only, but any person who chose might sign the petition?—It was a general petition for the payment of wages without stoppages.

 8672. What

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8672. What was the heading of the petition?—"The humble petition of the undersigned inhabitants of"———, the place.

8673. *Chairman.*] Not inhabitants engaged in the hosiery trade?—No; praying for a law for the payment of wages without stoppages. I sent to the clergymen of the villages a copy of the petition, asking them, as a favour, if, as I understood they did, the parishioners wished to sign it, they would be kind enough to let them sign it; or if anybody in the place would be willing to sign, to get their signatures and send the petition up to any Member of Parliament who would present it.

8674. I want to know about the words you have used in some of these documents that have been put before you; you call people robbers and swindlers, and describe them as persons guilty of stealing; I want to know whether you ever thought of affixing those terms to such persons in their literal sense?—Certainly not; I meant them to apply to the system: that was all.

8675. Did you mean anything beyond what you supposed to be a very strong way of expressing your opinion with reference to this question?—No; I meant to speak in the same way as the Anti-Corn Law League did when they spoke about the farmers, calling them a set of thieves, who would prevent corn coming into the country; I did not mean to use the language in any other way.

8676. Sir *H. Halford.*] When the term "a cancer in the trade" is applied to the stoppage system, is not that a very strong phrase?—It is. I have used this expression, that the stoppage system is a cancer on the breast of the nation.

8677. Mr. *Gardner.*] That is a metaphor; do you consider that calling a man a swindler is a metaphor?—No.

8678. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You say that the stoppage of frame rent is a stealing of wages?—According to Scripture it is.

8679. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you know that the term "a cancer in the trade" has been applied to the system of frame rent by a leading manufacturer in the hosiery trade?—I have heard so.

8680. Mr. *Cobbett.*] Were you a reader of the publication called the "Anti-Corn Law Circular," or the "Anti-Bread Tax Circular," between 1836 and 1846?—Not regularly; I may have picked it up and read it occasionally.

8681. Do you fancy that you acquired your strong mode of speaking from anything you saw there?—I fancy that I did.

8682. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you think that anything you found in the "Anti-Corn Law Circular," or in any other journal or publication, could justify you in calling the employers in the Leicestershire district swindlers, because they pay their wages in a way different from that which you should approve of?—I considered that I might use such expressions as I had seen used before; but I did not wish to do it offensively.

8683. Do you think that anything you found in the "Anti-Corn Law Circular," or in any other journal or publication, could justify you in calling the employers in the Leicestershire district swindlers, because they pay their wages in a manner different from that which you would approve of?—I have withdrawn that; what I complain of is the system.

8684. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Or is there anything to justify you in calling Mr. Morley a robber?—No.

Veneris, 29° *die Junii*, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Mundy.
Sir H. Halford.	Mr. Wickham.
Mr. Biggs.	Mr. Cobbett.
Lord John Manners.	

ROBERT INGHAM, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Edward Nicholson, called in; and Examined.

8685. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—In Leicester.

8686. What are you?—A Framework-knitter.

8687. Who do you work under?—Mr. Thomas Corah.

8688. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have you had any communication with Mr. Corah on the subject of your coming here?—Yes; he gave me to understand that I should come up here.

8689. Did anything further pass between you?—No, nothing particular.

8690. Can you state at all to the Committee what passed between you upon the subject of your coming here?—It was relative to the taking of rent when I was ill; I was ill at Christmas.

8691. Has Mr. Corah attempted to bias your evidence in any way?—Not the least.

8692. Have you had any communication with any other manufacturer on the subject of your coming up here?—No.

8693. Have you had any communication with anybody else on the subject, among the working men?—I have not.

8694. Or with those who represent, or are supposed to represent, their feelings and opinions upon this question?—No.

8695. You have had no communication with Messrs. Buckby & Elliott?—No.

8696. Or with anybody since you came up here?—No, not at all.

8697. Nor with Mr. Winters?—No.

8698. You are quite sure about all that?—Yes.

8699. Then you have come up here perfectly unfettered?—Quite.

8700. How long have you worked to Mr. Corah?—Between 15 and 16 years.

8701. During that time have you ever been ill?—I was ill last Christmas for seven weeks; the eighth week I went to the warehouse, I believe; I was under a doctor.

8702. Did you take any work with you upon that occasion?—Yes.

8703. How much did you take?—I think it was about a dozen and a half I took the first week.

8704. That was a short week's work, was it not?—Yes; it was the stuff which I had on hand when I was taken ill.

8705. You were ill seven weeks out of eight, you say?—Yes.

8706. How much rent did Mr. Corah charge you for those eight weeks?—He charged me a shilling.

8707. A shilling for the week in which you had worked?—Yes, that was what he charged me.

8708. Mr. *Biggs.*] Then he forgave you, in fact, seven weeks' rent?—Yes.

8709. Because you had been ill?—Yes.

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8710. Mr. *Gardner.*] When did this happen?—It was on Christmas-day that I was taken bad, and the following weeks I was ill and could not work.

8711. Is the rent the only deduction that Mr. Corah is in the habit of charging?—That is the only deduction with me, as a single frame.

8712. Can you state at all to us what Mr. Corah's general practice is?—I cannot; I have no knowledge of it; I never heard about the question of rent relative to illness; it never crossed me at all, and I wondered whether Mr. Corah acted upon that or did not; but I can only say, without any hesitation at all, that he did not take the rent from me.

8713. The only time you were ill, and were able to test Mr. Corah's practice in your own case, you found that Mr. Corah did not charge you with rent when you were ill?—He did not.

8714. Did he make any difficulty upon the subject?—Not the least.

8715. But you are not able to speak of your own knowledge as to his general practice?—I am not.

8716. Have no instances of people who have been ill in Mr. Corah's employ come under your own observation; is that what you mean?—I have known of people who have been ill working to Mr. Corah, but I cannot say I ever heard any complaint made; for my part I was quite at a loss to know whether anything of that sort took place or not; I supposed that what he did to me was the practice he adhered to; he met me several times when I was going to the doctor, and he signified to me that I was ill; and I was ill, for I was not able to do anything.

8717. He knew in your case that you were ill?—Yes, he did; I am certain of that.

8718. But you were so little acquainted with Mr. Corah's general practice, that when you went to settle with him about this rent you did not know whether he would forgive it you or not?—No, I did not.

8719. But he did forgive it you?—Yes.

8720. How old are you?—Sixty-nine.

8721. You work in a narrow frame, I suppose?—I do.

8722. What do you make?—I make three-and-sixpenny off a 16-gauge frame.

8723. How much work can you do now?—I can do about two dozen and a half, I might say comfortably in a fortnight; but I can do a little more. I believe, if I felt quite well, I should make nearly two dozen of them in the week; I should say two dozen, but then I must be very diligent to make them.

8724. You mean you could make, if you were very diligent, two dozen a week?—Yes.

8725. How many do you make in the week, do you think, taking one week with another?—In the fortnight I take in about three dozen; but if I was well through the week I could make a couple of dozen.

8726. I am only asking you what you actually do; you do make about a dozen and a half a week?—Yes, that is about it.

8727. And what do you get for those?—I get 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen.

8728. What deductions have you to pay out of that?—I pay a fortnight's rent; that is 2*s.*

8729. We are talking about the week?—I pay a shilling a week.

8730. That is the only deduction, is it?—That is the only deduction.

8731. How much do you net, or take away clear; what money do you carry away in your pocket, taking one week with another?—I take the whole of the money away; my wife seams the hose; there is nothing that I leave.

8732. Mr. *Biggs.*] What are your weekly average net earnings?—That amounts to 4*s.* 3*d.*

8733. Mr. *Gardner.*] How much could you make when you were an able-bodied man?—Of that sort of hose I could make as many as two dozen and a half in the week.

8734. Has machinery interfered with your branch at all?—I think it has; the introduction of the new machinery, I believe, has operated rather against the old machinery; that is my opinion.

8735. I suppose a woman could do quite as much as you can now, or perhaps more?—Yes, some women would make more.

8736. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have you ever been on short work since you have been employed for Mr. Corah?—No, I generally have stuff in hand.

8737. Do you know at all what Mr. Corah's custom is in case of short work; does

does he take whole rent or not, to your knowledge?—I should say this in favour of Mr. Corah; that his general way is to take rent, with the exception of Whitsuntide and Christmas. Now at Easter, things being rather flat, he did not give out stuff to many of the hands, but he never took any rent at all.

8738. You never have short work, have you?—I have been to him on a Saturday sometimes, and he has told me to come for stuff on the Monday morning.

8739. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is it Mr. Corah's general practice to give full work, do you know?—I think it is; I never noticed anything else; it was always accounted a very fair warehouse for giving out work.

8740. Do you know any instances of Mr. Corah giving out short work among your friends?—In flat times there may have been some difficulty, or a little complaint, but I have heard but very little of that; Mr. Corah is generally inclined to give out stuff. I have known times when the frames have stood.

8741. Can you form any opinion, or have you considered the subject, of what you think the effect of a legislative enactment putting an end to frame rents and charges would be?—I am myself completely against any interference between the masters and men. I have looked at that question, and I think that if there could be anything done that would be beneficial to the workmen, and if the masters and men could agree upon the question, it might be a good thing; but as to Parliamentary interference, or any other interference, I think it would be detrimental to the weaker party.

8742. By any other interference you mean interference by parties who are neither masters nor men?—I do; that is my meaning.

8743. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have you formed any opinion as to what would be the result of the abolition by legislation of frame rents, and how it would affect the workmen; whether it would work beneficially towards them, or otherwise?—I cannot see that it would be any particular advantage to the workmen at all; it might ease, very likely, a few complaints that are made now, but whether it would ultimately benefit them or not is a question with me.

8744. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have considered the subject, have you not, and know a good deal about the feelings of the people in that district; are not a good many people there under the impression that an Act of Parliament to abolish rents and stoppages would have the effect of putting the money which they now pay for rent and charges into their pockets, and so raising their wages?—Many workmen, I do believe, think so; but, in my opinion, that is a mistake on their part.

8745. Sir *H. Halford.*] How long have you worked for Mr. Corah?—Very nearly 16 years.

8746. You say that when you took in this work, having been sick, you were rather surprised when you found that the rent was not demanded of you?—I was quite surprised on my own part, for it was a thing I had not thought of at all whether Mr. Corah did or did not take the rent.

8747. But you rather expected he would take the rent?—I was rather inclined to think that that probably was the system, but I was very glad to find it was not so.

8478. What did you found that opinion upon; was it because it is the general system?—No, I do not know that it was upon that ground; it was a thing I took very little notice about. I know the general practice has been for years that there should be a rent; but I never heard particular notice taken whether the rent and charges were when there was no work, or whether they were taken when a person was not able to work. I know the general practice is, that if stuff is given out the manufacturers have generally expected the rent, and they have taken it. I mean that, at such a time as harvest time, if the hands have had stuff in hand, I have heard it said that the masters take the rent, though the workmen have been employed in the fields.

8749. You considered that Mr. Corah showed rather a particular indulgence to you in the case to which you have referred?—I took it so; I thought it proper to thank him.

8750. Are you aware what is the practice of other people; have you ever heard it mentioned by other framework-knitters in the way of complaint that rent was taken when work could not be done?—I cannot say; I heard very little of that.

8751. Where do you live?—I live in Leicester.

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8752. Has it always been your view that it was unnecessary to legislate on this matter?—It has been my opinion ever since I thought of the question at all; that is, 12 or 14 years.

8753. Do you remember as far back as the year 1843, a petition being sent to Parliament?—I think I do.

8754. Did you sign that petition?—I did not.

8755. You were not a party to it at all?—I was no party to a petition for Parliamentary interference.

8756. You held the same opinion then as you do now?—I did; the only petition I ever had much concern with was a petition to do away with the corn laws; that rather used to bite me sharpish.

8757. Working direct to Mr. Corah, you were quite satisfied with your position, and thought that no change was necessary; is that so?—I do not say about being satisfied; I would not exactly say that; I know there are things taking place in this trade by a new move, which is calculated to be detrimental to the workmen in a certain sense; there is, for instance, the introduction of a new description of machinery, which is rather operating against the men working to the old system; but in the course of a few years they will have died off.

8758. When you say you are not altogether dissatisfied, your dissatisfaction is with regard to the new machinery that has been introduced?—The depression in the trade and the interference with it have made things look rather unpleasant.

8759. But you are not dissatisfied with the mode of conducting the manufacture?—No, not altogether.

8760. Have you had any experience of working through a middleman?—No; I like to go to the fountain head.

8761. You think it is very preferable to work direct to the warehouse than through a middleman, do you?—Yes, I think so.

8762. Why?—Because I like no one to come in between me and my master.

8763. You think there might be the risk of oppression and disadvantage to you if any one did come in between you and your master?—Yes, I do; I think I am competent to manage my own affairs with the person I work with.

8764. And living at Leicester, you have no difficulty in doing that?—No.

8765. Lord *J. Manners.*] You work direct to the warehouse?—I do.

8766. And you earn about 5*s.* 3*d.* a week, minus the shilling which is subtracted for rent?—Yes.

8767. Leaving 4*s.* 3*d.* a week?—Yes.

8768. Supposing you did not work direct to the warehouse, can you tell us what other charges you would be subject to?—Yes, I could tell you some of them; a journeyman stocking-maker, working under a master, has 1*s.* to pay for the frame, which I suppose the hosier has, and then there is 3*d.* for the standing of the frame, and 3*d.* for taking the work in, and it is the practice, I believe, in these shops generally for the winder to have 6*d.*, which goes through the master's hands: whether the winder gets all the money it is not for me to say, but that is the practice.

8769. That altogether amounts to 1*s.* more?—Yes.

8770. A shilling rent, which you have to pay?—Yes.

8771. And a shilling more in the way you have specified?—Yes.

8772. That would reduce your average wages to 3 *s.* 3 *d.* a week?—Yes.

8773. Do you suppose that people in your position are very glad when they get their 3 *s.* 3 *d.* a week?—I do not think they are.

8774. Take your own case. If you were working, not direct to the warehouse, but to a middleman, do you think that you would wish for legislative interference or not?—I should not be very desirous for legislative interference then.

8775. Would you be very well contented with your condition?—I should not.

8776. You would cast about, and see if you could not mend it?—I should endeavour to alter my position, as well as I could.

8777. Mr. *Gardner.*] But do you think that your position, bad as it might be, would be improved by legislative interference?—I do not think it would.

8778. Mr. *Biggs.*] You do not think that, in a large concern, middlemen can be dispensed with entirely, do you?—I am not prepared to say whether the manufacturers could manage their business without the assistance of middlemen; I know that, as far as my recollection carries me, I have thought the framework-

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knitters looked rather better when they carried their own work in some 50 or 60 years ago.

8779. Lord *J. Manners.*] You think their condition was better then than it is now?—It appears so to me.

8780. Mr. *Gardner.*] They could carry in their work now if they liked, could they not?—There is some little obstacle.

8781. Lord *J. Manners.*] Will you be good enough to state to the Committee what, in your opinion, that obstacle is?—I believe the manufacturers now generally like the work to be brought in in larger quantities than they did in those days, when each man brought his own work in.

8782. Then if a master likes the work to be brought in by a middleman, and not direct by the workmen, it is not so easy for a workman to bring his work in himself?—There may be some obstacles, but that has never happened with me, so I could not say exactly how that is.

8783. Mr. *Gardner.*] Suppose a man to be working in a village 8 or 10 miles from Leicester, do you think it would answer his purpose to lose his day, taking in the work himself instead of employing a middleman?—I have heard stocking makers myself, in villages where they are some distance from Leicester, signify an idea that their bringing in their own work would cost them more than the middleman charges; but at the same time, I bear in mind all the while that I like the other system best, and I really believe that, if it had not been for the middlemen, framework-knitting would not have gone so low as it is; I do not think it is necessary either for framework-knitters or any other trade that they should work for what just keeps body and soul together; I think that cannot be necessary; that is my opinion.

8784. Sir *H. Halford.*] But that is the case with regard to the framework-knitters, is it not?—It is; though I do not believe myself that the manufacturers have any control over it at all.

8785. Mr. *Gardner.*] You mean the manufacturers have no control over the rate of wages?—No.

8786. It depends upon the state of trade and the supply of labour in proportion to the demand, does it not?—That is my view; I may be wrong, but that is my view of the thing.

8787. Sir *H. Halford.*] On what day of the week do you take your work in?—Generally on a Saturday.

8788. Do you adopt the general practice of making a holiday on Monday?—No; and I think there is a great mistake in the prevailing opinion upon that point; the framework-knitters have got the reputation of playing on Mondays and Tuesdays, but that is a great mistake, it is only what people like to say of them; if you take the bulk of them you will find that they are as industrious a class of men as there is in the country, in my opinion, but they have got a bad name, which I do not think they merit.

8789. In point of fact, then, you say that they do not make a holiday on Mondays and Tuesdays?—There may be some of them who may be rather at leisure.

8790. It may sometimes happen, may it not, that they have not stuff to work on the Monday and Tuesday, and in that case they must make a holiday?—There may be cases of that kind, but not so much so as people talk of.

8791. Lord *J. Manners.*] Who gave them such a bad name?—I do not know whether they have not been instrumental in it themselves; but I think that such observations are made upon them which they do not merit.

8792. Then you think that if they do not work on Mondays and Tuesdays, it is not their fault; but it is because they cannot get work; is that your opinion?—No, I do not think that.

8793. What do you think, then?—I know there is sometimes a little obstacle in getting stuff, but framework-knitting is a caged thing, and they may take a little leisure, which people may take advantage of in slandering them, which they do not merit; a man is not an idle man because he looks out of doors a little.

8794. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware of a Mr. Sporritt, who used to be a manufacturer; he is not a manufacturer now, I think?—No.

8795. How came he to abandon the business?—I do not know; I knew him very well; I have not seen him lately.

8796. Do you know whether, when he was a manufacturer, he was in the habit of

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of taking frame rent?—I do not know, I am sure; I never heard much said against him.

8797. Have you had any reason to suspect that he did not succeed in the trade in consequence of not taking frame rent?—I have heard him complain a little about competition; that it had too much head against him; but I do not know to what extent it went.

8798. You have heard him complain of the competition?—Yes.

8799. On what account?—The competition that he complained of was something in the way of hose that had been made by what is commonly called these middlemen, who brought them and sold them to these warehouses, which obliged him to sell at a price he was not able to stand up with.

8800. In consequence of work being taken out by the middlemen for the sake of the frame rents, I presume?—In consequence of middlemen or something of that sort working up stuff.

8801. Would not that be the natural explanation of it?—It might be taken in that light. I could not say.

8802. Mr. *Gardner.*] Have you any children?—I have five children, but they are all grown up.

8803. Did you bring them up to knitting?—No, I have none who are framework-knitters; and if I had a hundred children, I would not bring them up to framework-knitting.

8804. You thought the prospects of the trade were rather gloomy, and so turned your attention to other matters?—Yes.

8805. I hope they are doing well?—Middling. I have been down with the expectation of seeing one of them on the Thames this morning, but he was out at sea.

8806. Does he get better wages at that than he would get at framework-knitting?—I understand he gets about 30*s.* a week; it would take nearly a month for him to get that at the frame.

8807. I suppose the relations of demand and supply in that trade are not so unhealthy as they are in the case of framework-knitting?—No. He is on board a tug.

8808. I suppose if his employer offered to reduce his wages considerably, he would strike and leave; do you think that if they were to say, "We will knock 5*s.* off your 30*s.*, under the pretence of finding you with oil," he would stand it?—No, I do not think he would. He was going off to the Crimea, and I expected he was off; but he has not gone.

8809. Mr. *Cheetham.*] How long have you been employed as a framework-knitter?—Since I first learnt the framework-knitting: for 57 years, I should think.

8810. Can you tell us what you had per dozen for the article 50 years ago, that you are now receiving 3*s.* 6*d.* for?—Those articles were not things that were made in this trade at that time; not the things I am working on now; they are things that have come in within the last 10 or 12 years; there were not so many of those articles made then.

8811. There has been a change?—A great change; the lambswool hose was made in large quantities; and these sham knits, that are now very prevalent in the trade, are, I think, substitutes for them, as they went out.

8812. You have had your loom in your own house, have you not?—Yes.

8813. And your family has done the winding and other matters for you?—My wife winds a little sometimes, when she is in the humour.

8814. What must a young man who has no house of his own do; he would be obliged, in order to get a loom, to resort to the shop of a middleman, would he not?—I think a good many are obliged to do that.

8815. Therefore they are charged for that 3*d.* standing, which otherwise would have to be paid for in the shape of rent for the cottage in which they lived, provided they had a loom in their own cottage?—As far as regards having the frame in their own houses, it appears to me to generally reduce a trifle off the rent.

8816. But in the case of a man who has no house rent to pay, and who is living in lodgings, he pays the middleman for the expense of the loom standing?—Yes, that is the way.

8817. And the taking-in charge of the middleman is to save the time of the framework-

framework-knitter going himself into the warehouse with his work?—That is what it is supposed to be for.

8818. Then the question is, whether these charges are or are not reasonable between the two parties?—That is the question that lies between them.

8819. Lord *J. Manners.*] You were ill, you say, seven weeks; in the eighth week you worked: how many days did you work?—I worked what we generally call a week; I did what I could; I had got about 11 lbs. 8 oz. in hand; I worked that up and took it to the warehouse, and the question was about the rent, which was 1 *s.* a week. I was not aware that any notice would be taken of it at all.

8820. You worked a full week, did you?—Yes.

8821. *Chairman.*] You did not pay for the seven weeks you were sick?—No, I paid nothing.

8822. Mr. *Mundy.*] Have you always taken direct to the warehouse yourself?—Yes, I have.

8823. You have never worked under a middleman?—No.

8824. You prefer the other plan?—Yes. When I first learnt to be a stocking maker, I learnt in a framework-knitter's shop; I did not, when I was a boy, work on my own account, but since I have been a man I have always taken my own work in to the warehouse.

8825. You take your work in every Saturday, do you?—Yes.

8826. And do you take out the material on the Saturday?—There is never any omission on my part; I mostly have the stuff when I take the hose in.

8827. You bring it back the same day?—There are times when I take in a fortnight's work, and then I have as much stuff given out as will last me for another fortnight. I take it in, and I have no obstacle in having stuff again very likely for a week.

8828. But do you bring back the stuff the same day that you take in the work? It is mostly so with me. I have had instances in which Mr. Corah has said to me, "You can come up on Monday morning for the stuff"; it does happen so at odd times, but it is not common with me.

8829. Are any others of your family employed in the same way; does your wife work in a frame?—No.

8830. Never?—No.

8831. Only you?—Only myself.

8832. She does the winding sometimes, does she not?—Yes, sometimes; she goes out of a day sometimes to wash, and do those sort of things; my wife is an old woman.

8833. Sir *H. Halford.*] With reference to a former question, are we to understand from you that Mr. Sporritt complained of the effect of his having to compete with those who took frame rents, and not that he was materially injured in his own circumstances by it?—I have heard Mr. Sporritt mention to me about his being injured by competition; but he has not made any reference to others taking frame rents, which enabled them to compete with him.

8834. Mr. *Cheetham.*] He did not state to you the cause of this competition?—He did not.

8835. Sir *H. Halford.*] You are not aware whether Mr. Sporritt was in bad circumstances, or whether he complained of his circumstances?—No, I never heard of it till I heard it from you.

8836. Mr. *Biggs.*] You always understood him to be a rich man, did you not?—I did.

8837. *Chairman.*] You say that, for the 50 years that you have been in the trade, people have worked pretty generally direct to the warehouses without the intervention of middlemen?—You will understand me that I have been a framework knitter as far back as 57 years, but at one part of my time I was a soldier; I was in the first dragoon guards for eight years and a half, and after I was a stocking maker I was a drummer four years in the Leicester Militia; that was in 1798.

8838. In the earlier part of your time, did the men pretty generally own the frames on which they worked themselves, or did they hire them?—I believe that in the early part of my recollection there were more framework-knitters who had frames of their own than there have been latterly.

8839. Some witness has spoken about what were called frame clubs; do you know anything of them?—Yes; in the early part of my time I know there were frame clubs.

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8840. How were they managed?—Something upon the same principle as the sick clubs are now; a man paid into these frame clubs once a month.

8841. And then, when a certain sum was in hand, they allotted who should have a sum to enable him to purchase a frame?—Yes.

8842. They did not work together in a shop of their own; the object was to enable a man to become the master of his own frame?—Yes.

8843. So that he might work where he liked?—Yes.

8844. Was there ever anything, to your knowledge, like a voluntary society of men working together upon the frames, and forming a kind of partnership of workmen?—No, I do not think there was anything of that kind in those days.

8845. Mr. *Cheetham.*] At the time when the workmen had their own frames, did they receive a higher rate per dozen, they finding the machinery, than those men received who worked upon the masters' frames?—I have heard men state, that during the time that there has been a brisk demand the frames have been considered an accommodation to the masters who employed them during that time, and that they have had something more a dozen at different times as the season came on, as the articles were wanted; but I believe of late those kinds of frames, and independent frames, have stood the worst chance a good deal.

8846. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know what caused these frame clubs to be broken up?—I could not say; I know a change did take place, but what was the cause of it I do not know.

8847. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You do not know why the workmen ceased to be possessors of frames, and why all the frames ultimately, or the great mass of them, went into the hands of the manufacturers?—I think that the circumstances of the framework-knitters was one cause; during the war they were rather more in demand than they have been of late years.

8848. The frames were?—The framework-knitters themselves.

8849. You mean their labour was more in demand?—Yes; there seemed to be more value attached to them than there is now.

8850. Sir *H. Halford.*] I think you said that the independent frames stood a worse chance than the others?—Yes.

8851. Why?—There not being a sufficient demand to keep the whole employed, the independent frames go to the wall under those circumstances.

8852. They do not get employment?—They do not get employment.

8853. The manufacturers prefer employing their own frames?—I believe they do generally.

8854. That is for the sake of the rent, I presume?—Yes, I dare say it is; there is a good deal of reason in that. If a manufacturer has frames of his own, it does not seem to me to be reasonable to expect that he would employ an independent frame, and let his own frame stand still.

8855. Because he could not do that without foregoing the profit derived from rent?—He could not.

8856. Mr. *Cheetham.*] When you were a journeyman at the earlier period of your life, did you pay rent for the frame you worked upon?—Yes.

8857. That was the rule at that time?—Yes.

8858. Was that a subject of grievance at that period?—It was not; but there has been an increase in the rent paid for frames since that time, and I believe there has been more complaint relative to the enhanced sum that is paid for a frame than there has been relative to the principle altogether.

8859. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you know what the circumstances were which led to that increase?—I can state what, in my opinion, is the cause. I can remember very well that in 1825 there was a turn out of the framework-knitters; at that time there were some few houses that were taking a shilling for the narrow frames, and in the turn out that took place in 1825 it was agreed to advance the price of the work that was being made a shilling a dozen, and there was a condition put in between the manufacturers and the framework-knitters' committee that there should be 3*d.* added to the rent of the frame. At the time I considered that the framework-knitters were as much to blame as the hosiers were.

8860. And the charge made for rent has remained so ever since?—Yes.

8861. But the price, in consideration of which the increased rent was exacted, has not remained?—No; it went in a few months.

8862. That soon went?—Yes.

8863. And the rent remained?—And the rent remained.

8864. It has remained so ever since?—Yes.

8865. So that the wages have sunk and the rent has increased?—Yes; and under those circumstances it bites rather sharper.

8866. Lord *J. Manners.*] Was the rise in wages in 1825 part of the condition of this agreement?—Yes, it was.

8867. But that part of the agreement is not now observed, and has not been for a long time?—No.

8868. The other part, however, affecting the rise in the rent of the frame, is observed now?—Yes; that keeps its position.

8869. Mr. *Biggs.*] But since 1825, wages have alternated; they have been occasionally higher in good seasons, have they not, and lower when the trade has been depressed?—Yes; they have fluctuated.

8870. You have thought on the subject of the charges of middlemen, I presume; if the charges of the middlemen were abolished by Act of Parliament, in what way, seeing that a middleman must be paid for the services he renders, would you have him paid?—I cannot see how he could be paid at all without there was a change in the price of the article made. I should expect that, if he was not paid in this way, he must be paid by the manufacturers, and then they would reduce the wages, I presume, in order to enable them to pay the middleman.

8871. Then the effect of that would be to reduce the net wages of the workman to the same level?—I expect it would; I cannot see it in any other light.

8872. Lord *J. Manners.*] That is, supposing the middleman does not exact more now than would fairly remunerate him in the position of a paid servant of the manufacturer?—A great deal would depend upon that, I expect.

8873. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you heard anything of a net system of payment of wages in Leicester?—Yes; it is talked of sometimes.

8874. Have you happened to meet with any of the workmen who have been working on that system?—Yes, I have.

8875. And do they express satisfaction with it?—I have heard some of them express themselves satisfied, and I have heard others that have worked upon the net system speak about it, and they have made it appear to me that they have had actually to pay rent and all, as well as have a deduction for the net; what they have received has been 4*d.* a dozen less, or 4*d.* in the shilling; it is a thing that I have had very little concern with, but I know there is something of that sort carried on; I have heard men say that they like it better, and I have heard others object to it.

8876. Sir *H. Halford.*] In some instances they have had to pay a poundage; that is to say, it has been deducted from the work, and the middleman has charged them rent at the same time?—I have heard that said.

8877. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Where that is done it is not, in fact, the net system?—No.

8878. You are receiving 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen for your work, are you not?—Yes.

8879. And you do a dozen and a half a week?—Yes.

8880. That is equivalent to paying 8*d.* per dozen for the rent, so that if you receive 2*s.* 10*d.* per dozen net, you make the same net wages as you do now; if Mr. Corah gave you 2*s.* 10*d.* a dozen, a dozen and a half at 2*s.* 10*d.* would leave you 4*s.* 3*d.* net, which is what you get now?—Yes.

8881. Do you see any difficulty in the way of the employers and employed carrying out a system of that kind among themselves, if it is thought desirable, by voluntary arrangement?—I have thought that if a thing of that sort was adopted by and with the consent of the manufacturers, it would seem to me to be more on a stable principle than by legislative interference, because it appears to me that by the Legislature interfering in these cases, there must be pains and penalties attached to the Act, and I do not believe there is virtue enough among the stocking-makers to make them adhere to the provisions of an Act of Parliament, let it be what it would.

8882. Is it your opinion that the interference of the Legislature, where the same object might be produced without it, is often productive of an ill-feeling between the employers and employed?—That has been my opinion; and I think that generally there is ill-feeling enough between master and man, without anything calculated to create a worse feeling than generally exists at all times.

8883. Mr. *Gardner.*] You think that from the necessary circumstances of the trade, the workmen are quite sufficiently in the power of the employers, without further stimulating the animosity of the employers against the workmen by pains and penalties?—Yes; I have an objection to that.

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8884. Sir *H. Halford.*] I understand you to mean that you consider framework-knitters to be in so abject and depressed a condition that, let the Legislature pass any Act they pleased, it could not be enforced against the wish and desire of the masters?—That is my opinion.

Sarah Bryan, called in; and Examined.

Sarah Bryan.

8885. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—Wharf-street, Denman-street, Leicester.

8886. Are you connected with the hosiery trade in any way?—Yes.

8887. In what way?—I have my frames of Mr. Corah.

8888. Mr. *Gardner.*] How many frames have you?—I have five now.

8889. They are for your own family?—Yes, two of them.

8890. You had three once, had you not?—Yes, I had.

8891. You had three children, but now you have only two?—Yes; and three journeymen; two living in the house, and one living out of it.

8892. I suppose you take the frames from Mr. Corah?—Yes; I am responsible for the work.

8893. And for the rent?—And the rent too.

8894. Before you came here, had you any conversation with Mr. Corah on the subject of your coming?—No, not at all, further than he told me that I must come to London; and I received a note, from you, I expect it was, or some one.

8895. You mean the summons to attend here as a witness?—Yes. I told him I did not like the idea of coming, but if I was to come, I must come, and I would speak the truth as far as I knew it; I would not do anything that was wrong on either side; and he said that was all I was required to do.

8896. Did Mr. Corah say anything to bias you in any way?—No, not at all; nothing; that was all that passed.

8897. Have you had any communication with any other manufacturer?—No.

8898. Or middleman?—No.

8899. I mean with reference to your coming up here?—No.

8900. Have you had any communication with any other persons?—No, it was quite an entire strange thing to me altogether. When I received the order, I did not know what I was to do with it, and of course I went to master to inquire what I was to do; that was what passed between us, and no more.

8901. Do you know at all what Mr. Corah's practice is?—I can say what his practice has been with me; his practice has been this; when the machine has been at work, he has taken a shilling a week rent for it; and I have worked to him for these last 38 years; at least to his father, before he came into the business.

8902. Mr. Corah's father?—Mr. Corah's father; I have never worked to any one else. It was my husband who commenced it; but he is dead, and I have been in my own position now for 12 years last March.

8903. You took you husband's place?—I did.

8904. Then you ought to be acquainted with the practice of Mr. Corah?—He has always found me plenty of work to do, and I have always been in the habit of enjoying very good health, with the exception of a day or two, but I never named anything about that to Mr. Corah; so I always paid the rent, and I expected it was right to do so. If I had been ill for a longer period of time, I should have applied to him not to take the rent; but it has not been so.

8905. Have you ever heard from other people what Mr. Corah's practice has been with respect to taking rent in cases of sickness?—Some have said, "I paid it;" and some have said, "I have not;" but I do not go into the warehouse more than once in six or seven weeks, so that I do not get that intelligence among the hands that I should if I went every week.

8906. If I were to ask for your own impression as to Mr. Corah's practice in that respect, what should you say?—He has always dealt with me very well, and my hands have always been satisfied.

8907. You say that a case of sickness, fortunately for you, has not occurred?—It has not; there was one old gentleman who was taken with rheumatics in the knee, and he said he had nothing to subsist upon at all, and therefore he would go into the union till he got better, and that I might set his machinery; and, of course,

I did

I did so, but I set it upon the condition, that if he got better and was able to resume his employ again, he must have his work when he came out; and it was so agreed on, and I set the frame; when he came out he came to me again, and he is now working to me. I have one who has worked to me for these last 20 years, and he is getting on much the same; mine are very old hands; they do not shift about; they are very hard-working men; I can say that.

8908. In the course of your experience in this business, in your own or your husband's time, has any person of veracity, who you know to have been really ill, come to you, and said, "Mr. Corah has charged me rent for such and such a time, when I have been ill"?—No.

8909. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have never known a single case of that kind of your own personal knowledge?—No; I have not.

8910. Mr. *Gardner.*] It is possible that sometimes a representation may be made to a hosier that a workman is ill when he really is not ill, is it not?—Yes, perhaps it might be the case; I cannot say whether it is or is not; it has not been the practice with me to say to my employer that the men have been ill when they have not.

8911. You say you have two children?—Yes, I have.

8912. What age are they?—One is 28, I believe; I am not certain of their age exactly.

8913. Is that a young man or a young woman?—A young woman; they are both married.

8914. The other is a son, is it not?—Yes.

8915. Thirty-four years of age?—Thirty-five.

8916. Is your daughter a married woman?—Yes.

8917. How much work does she do in a week?—She can do three dozen a week.

8918. Has she any family?—She has one child.

8919. She has to attend to that child, I suppose?—No; a girl nurses it.

8920. Then the whole of her time is occupied in the frame?—Nearly so.

8921. How many dozen a week does she do?—Three.

8922. At how much per dozen?—Three shillings a dozen.

8923. What are the deductions that you pay to Mr. Corah out of that?—One shilling.

8924. This is in your own house?—Yes.

8925. She has no rent to pay, I suppose?—She does not live in my house.

8926. Does she pay the rent to you then; standing rent?—Yes, 3*d.*; and 3*d.* for the taking in of the work and bringing it out.

8927. That is for your trouble?—Yes, and 6*d.* for the winder; altogether it makes 2*s.*; 1*s.* for the frame rent; 6*d.* for the winding of the yarn; 3*d.* for me for taking it in and fetching it out; and 3*d.* more for the standing of the machine; making altogether 2*s.*

8928. Do you consider that you make a very great profit out of that 3*d.* for standing?—No; if I had not anything more than that, I could not do with it at all.

8929. You are responsible for the material, are you not?—Yes.

8930. Do you consider that you could do it for less than 3*d.*?—No.

8931. It is not a very profitable business, I believe?—No, it is not; it is far from it.

8932. Why does not your daughter work direct to the warehouse herself?—Because she would rather work under me than have the trouble of going backwards and forwards to the warehouse, for she would soon lose more time that the payment of that small sum would be; you must sit and take your turn; perhaps you are some hours gone, and then at times, perhaps there is an order the master wants doing, and you must go up, let it be what day of the week it may be; and for the sake of the 3*d.* they pay, they would rather pay that than be at that trouble.

8933. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Your charge of 3*d.* may involve going twice in the week to the warehouse?—Yes, and sometimes four or five times.

8934. Mr. *Gardner.*] In a large concern like Mr. Corah's, it is impossible to prevent the waiting; they do it as fast as they can, do they not?—It is quite impossible to prevent waiting; it would be very wrong for one to get in before another who had been waiting there a long time; he always takes them in their turn; first come, first served, as we call it among ourselves.

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8935. You say the principal part of your daughter's time is occupied in this framework?—Yes.

8936. How many hours a day should you say she works?—I could not say, I am sure.

8937. What is the practice on Monday?—They begin about seven o'clock on Monday morning, and they hold on till dark in the evening, and in the rest part of the week they begin between four and five o'clock generally, and they work up to three o'clock on Saturday; three o'clock on Saturday is what we call our reckoning time, and then the men give over, and receive, at that time, what they have earned in the week.

8938. *Chairman.*] At what hour do they leave off on other nights, except Saturday?—We work till dark five days in the week, and we work till three o'clock on Saturday.

8939. Mr. *Wickham.*] Do you say you begin between four and five in the morning?—Yes.

8940. Mr. *Gardner.*] What intervals of leisure are there in the daytime?—I should say not more than two hours altogether.

8941. Suppose they want to go out, what do they do?—No, they do not want to go out; they could not; if they did, they could not get a living at all.

8942. You mean that to make three dozen a week it is necessary they should work these hours?—Yes; and some cannot make that; it depends upon the hands; some are much slower than others.

8943. Your daughter will make that?—Yes; and I have one old man who makes two dozen and a half; he is an old man past 60 years of age.

8944. These are narrow frames?—Yes.

8945. What branch of the trade?—It is called the sham-knit branch.

8946. That is the lowest paid branch, I believe?—I believe it is.

8647. In point of fact, the persons who are employed in this work are principally old men, and women, and children?—Yes.

8948. An able-bodied man has no right to be working at that work?—No, they will not do it.

8949. Mr. *Wickham.*] You do not mean that you begin at four or five in the morning in the winter time, do you?—No.

8950. You begin at daylight, I suppose?—No, we begin at candlelight, but not much before seven; and then we work up till 10 at night.

8951. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you use lights in the morning?—Yes, in winter.

8952. Mr. *Mundy.*] You work till 10 o'clock in the winter?—Yes.

8553. Mr. *Gardner.*] You make a charge for the candles, do you not?—That they find themselves, and needles also; if they break any they have to find more; I have nothing to do with that.

8954. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you tell us what those charges would be?—We have 4 *d.* a dozen for the seaming of them, and then there are the other charges I have named before; so, for the seaming of three dozen of hose, there would be 1 *s.*

8955. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you conceive to be the net wages of your daughter; that is, the earnings she has clear of all deductions?—About 6 *s.*

8956. On the average?—Yes.

8957. And how many dozen does your son make?—Four dozen.

8958. *Chairman.*] Does your daughter receive so much as 6 *s.*; she receives 9 *s.*, and pays 1 *s.* for rent, 1 *s.* for charges to you, 1 *s.* for seaming, and then she has her candles and needles to find?—Yes.

8959. How much would that be?—I cannot tell you that.

8960. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would it be more than 6 *d.* a week?—It would be more than that in the winter season.

8961. But not more than that all the year round?—I dare say it would not be more than 6 *d.* a week all the year round.

8962. Mr. *Gardner.*] That would leave about 5 *s.* 6 *d.*?—Yes.

8963. How many dozen hose does the son make?—Four dozen.

8964. How much wages does he get net?—Three shillings and fourpence would be taken out of the 12 *s.*

8965. The rent makes it 11 *s.*; what are the remaining deductions, 1 *s.* 4 *d.*?—Yes.

8966. That would leave 8 *s.* 8 *d.*?—Yes.

8967. Have

8967. Have you made any deduction from that for candles and needles?—That he finds himself.

8968. You put that at 6 *d.* a week?—It would take 6 *d.* or more.

8969. Mr. *Mundy.*] What age is your son?—Thirty-five.

8970. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is the seaming allowed in that sum?—No; they pay the seaming out of the 3 *s.* they have per dozen; they pay 4 *d.* a dozen for the seaming.

8971. Mr. *Gardner.*] I make out your statement to be, that the real earnings of your son are about 8 *s.* 2 *d.*, and the daughter about 5 *s.* 6 *d.*?—That is about what it is.

8972. Lord *J. Manners.*] That statement is assuming that they are always on full work?—Yes; I have never been short of work; being a very old servant, the master generally counts on keeping me employed.

8973. You are rather a favourite perhaps?—I cannot say that, but I have never wanted work.

8974. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have always had plenty of work?—Yes.

8975. Do you know what Mr. Corah's general practice is about giving full work?—I do not hear much complaint about the work; I believe they generally have full work; I do not hear any complaints.

8976. You say your children are both married?—Yes.

8977. Is your son an able-bodied man?—Yes, he is; he works with me on purpose to see to things rather more than I perhaps should be able myself.

8978. He superintends the frames a little, I suppose?—Rather so; he is in the shop, and can see that things are going on more correct than I should do. He does not waste any time in doing so.

8979. It may answer his purpose as a kind of assistant to you, otherwise I should think an able-bodied man ought to be able to get better employment than 8 *s.* a week?—He is going to try, for that is a very low calling, I assure you.

8980. I suppose it has answered your purpose hitherto, because you are relations, and assist one another?—Yes; that is how it has been, but he does not intend to stay at that work.

8981. I suppose there are very few able-bodied men engaged in it?—There are not many; there are some men that were taught years ago, when they were not so swift as they are now-a-days.

8982. And women and children?—Yes.

8983. I suppose a woman can earn almost as much as a man?—Some women can earn more; I should say that my daughter can earn more than many of the men, and much more than an old man.

8984. Are your other journeymen old people?—Yes, they are; there is one going 61, and the other about 56, I believe. I cannot say how old the other man is, but I dare say he is between 40 and 50.

8985. How comes it that he has not something better to do?—I do not know, I am sure; it is what they have been brought up to all their lifetime, and now they are getting old they cannot alter their situation. There is not employment enough for the young and able, and the old ones they do not want in fresh businesses; they want those who are active.

8986. It is a business which has ceased to be one to which an able-bodied man ought to look?—It is; it is a very bad business.

8987. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are these five frames which you have mentioned, your own property?—No; they belong to Mr. Corah.

8988. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have none of your own?—No, I have none of my own; I had some of my own formerly, but I have not now.

8989. Lord *J. Manners.*] During the years you have had these five frames of Mr. Corah, have you had any opportunity of knowing what his practice is in cases of sickness, or in cases of short work?—His practice with me has been what I have stated; he has never taken any charges off me on account of sickness, because I never gave an account about any sickness to him in my life. If the hands had been sick, or likely to be ill, they could have gone into the infirmary, or they could have gone into the union house, and I could have set the machinery till they had got better, so as to come back to their employ. I never gave any account to Mr. Corah about sickness; if I had, I do not suppose he would have taken the rent.

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8990. With respect to other people in Mr. Corah's employ, did I understand you to say that you have heard some say he did take rent in cases of sickness, and others, that he did not?—Yes; I have heard some say that the master has taken the rent, but whether he has taken it or not, it is not for me to say.

8991. In your own experience the case has not arisen?—What I have stated is the fact.

8992. Mr. *Gardner.*] In reply to a question of mine to this effect, whether any person of whose truthfulness you were informed, or who you knew really to be ill, had come to you and said Mr. Corah during such illness had taken rent, you said no such instances had occurred to you?—No; it never did.

8993. Lord *J. Manners.*] Are you in a position which makes it likely that people would ever go and tell you, and does it strike you as extraordinary that they should not have come and told you that?—No; for I am not one who runs about newsing; people do not come to me much.

8994. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have you thought on the subject of frame rents, and whether it would be wise to abolish them by Act of Parliament or not?—I am sure I cannot say anything about it; we had quite as lief go on as we are. My men are very well satisfied, only they would like a little more for their labour; that is all the obstacle that there is among my hands.

8995. *Chairman.*] Was your late husband a middleman?—Yes.

8996. You continued to carry on his business after his death?—Yes.

8997. Mr. *Gardner.*] Your late husband worked in a frame himself, did he not?—Yes.

8998. *Chairman.*] But he acted as middleman in the way you are doing now, taking in goods, and receiving the same payment?—Yes.

8999. Mr. *Mundy.*] Was he called a middleman?—Yes.

9000. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Did you attend to a frame?—No.

9001. You attended to the house?—Yes.

9002. Has the payment made to this description of hands reduced much?—Yes, a great deal.

9003. Lord *J. Manners.*] Has the rent of frames been reduced also?—No; at one time they were 9*d.* a week, and now they are 1*s.*, and have been so for years.

9004. *Chairman.*] What is the description of hose that they make?—3*s.* a dozen.

9005. What do you call the hose?—Sham knit hose.

9006. Do you know what the selling price of that is. I fancy the price to the customer has fallen since the time you first knew it?—I do not doubt that it has; but I do not know.

9007. You have not had occasion to buy any?—No.

9008. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you know whether or not a great deal of that kind of work is made on improved machinery now?—Yes, I believe it is.

9009. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you seen any of the improved machinery yourself?—Yes, such as we term the roundabout.

9010. Have you formed any conclusion in your own mind as to what will be its effect upon the trade in which you are engaged; do you think it will throw your frames out of employ?—I cannot say; I do not know that it will.

9011. Does it do more than yours?—Yes, a considerable deal.

9012. It produces stockings at less cost than they can be produced for by your own frames?—Yes, it does.

9013. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you not think that that has a tendency to reduce wages?—Yes, I think so.

9014. Mr. *Cheetham.*] And it will do so, will it not, unless the trade extends, and finds employment for both kinds of machinery?—But then the wages will be brought down so low to compete with it, that we shall not be the better for it.

9015. Lord *J. Manners.*] It has no tendency, however, to reduce the frame rent; whatever the wages may be, the rent remains the same?—Yes, the rent remains the same.

Mr. *Joseph Freer*, called in; and Examined.

9016. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—At Blaby, near Leicester.

9017. Are you a stocking knitter?—I am a cap hand; making striped caps to go abroad.

9018. Do you make them in frames?—Yes, single frames.

9019. Who do you work to?—I work to Mr. Robert Walker's warehouse, Rutland-street, Leicester.

9020. Do you work in your own house, or in a middleman's shop?—In my own house; I have two or three hands and my own wife.

9021. You are, in fact, a middleman?—Hardly; I work hard myself.

9022. But you also act for other persons working in the same house?—Yes; there are six frames altogether.

9023. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you take in the work for those six frames?—Yes.

9024. You act as undertaker, do you not, for those who work in them?—Yes.

9025. And you are responsible to Mr. Walker for the work?—Yes.

9026. How long have you worked for Mr. Walker?—Nine years at Michaelmas.

9027. Have you ever been unable to work from illness during that time?—Yes.

9028. What has been the course that has been pursued?—He has never taken my rent when I have been ill.

9029. And how long have you been ill do you think?—The last time was last winter, when I was ill a week; I did not go to Leicester on the Saturday, but he returned my rent; he sent it back by the carrier.

9030. Do you know Mr. Walker's general practice in cases of illness?—That is the practice.

9031. What is the practice?—Taking no rent when they are sick; I am positive of that.

9032. Have you heard your fellow-workmen complain that they have been charged rent for frames when they have been unable to work?—No, I have not; there may be some in Leicester that are very hard men; Mr. Walker never has; I never heard a complaint of the kind, and there are several hands at Blaby, working under him.

9033. What do you think is the general feeling of the workmen in your village, as to paying rent for their frames?—I have had some conversation with them, and with people in two little villages near us, and they think it will be a detriment to us.

9034. Mr. *Biggs.*] What will?—To take the rent off; if they take the rent off they think they will be lowered in their wages.

9035. You mean to say that the opinion of the workmen in your village is against any legislative interference with the frame rent?—Yes; they have talked about poundage.

9036. What is the opinion of the workmen about poundage; are they in favour of a poundage system?—If it was to come in on a low system

9037. What is your opinion?—I do not know; I think we shall do no good if we do not keep as we are.

9038. What do you think would be the effect of the poundage system?—I do not know; I cannot answer to that.

9039. What do you think would be the effect of the abolition of frame rents by Act of Parliament?—I cannot say anything to that.

9040. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think they would get the same wages as they do now, if frame rents were abolished?—Our employers are masters of us, and they can do as they please with us, and they could give us what wages they pleased; that is my opinion of them; I think if our frame rents came off, we should have it on in other ways.

9041. They could not afford to let you have frames for nothing, could they?—No.

9042. If they did not charge you rent, they would reduce your wages to the same extent, would they not?—I think so.

9043. Mr. *Gardner.*] If a law were passed to prevent the owners of frames from taking rent for them, in your opinion it would be no better, and perhaps it would

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would be worse for the stocking makers?—Yes, for I think that in slack trade we should be many of us out of employ.

9044. You think, that if rents and charges were abolished by Act of Parliament, there would be no inducement to give even the little employ that is now given in bad times?—No, they would not lay up any stock, as they do now that they are receiving rent.

9045. In slack times, then, the system of rents and charges operates to give a certain amount of employment?—Yes.

9046. Mr. *Biggs.*] You make certain charges to your workmen for the services you render them, do you not?—Yes, I charge 3*d.* a frame for going to Leicester.

9047. What else?—Nothing else from them.

9048. Do you mean to say you fetch out yarn and take it back for 3*d.* a dozen?—Yes; I send by carrier from Blaby to Leicester.

9049. And superintend the work?—Yes; I get 3*d.* for all.

9050. If the people you employ had to go to the warehouse themselves and fetch out the stuff, and take the work in, it would cost them more than 3*d.*, would it not?—A shilling at least.

9051. Then, in fact, you do it for them cheaper than they could do it for themselves?—Much.

9052. And they are satisfied?—Quite.

9053. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You do not charge for standing-room, do you?—Yes; what I have at home I would charge for, but I have none at home; they are just round me.

9054. Sir *H. Halford.*] You charge nothing for standing?—We have nobody but my wife and me.

9055. Mr. *Biggs.*] Suppose these charges were abolished also like frame rents, by Act of Parliament, you could not perform these services for nothing?—No.

9056. How should you pay yourself?—I must lower the price so much a dozen to the workmen on the caps I take in.

9057. You must give so much less than you receive?—Yes.

9058. In fact you must reduce the wages of the workmen?—Yes.

9059. There would be the warehouse price and your price?—Yes.

9060. Would that be an improvement, do you think?—I think not.

9061. Lord *J. Manners.*] Would it make the men any worse off than they are now?—I think it would be worse; they would not be satisfied; I do not think it would do any good.

9062. You have said, that in case of sickness Mr. Walker would not take frame rent?—Not a farthing.

9063. Do you know what his custom is if trade is bad?—If he gives half work he takes half rent; I was limited to about 8*d.* a week some years ago. I have been only stopped once these nine years; I was not stopped then, but it got to 8*d.* a week, and he took 8*d.* rent.

9064. And he does the same with other men in the village whose work you take in, does he?—Yes; I do not think there is any respect to persons with him at all.

9065. Have you ever heard, or do you know any employers who take full rent when they give out half work?—I have never heard to that effect.

9066. But supposing there to be such a case, do you think the workpeople would be satisfied?—No, I do not think so.

9067. You think they would have a just ground of complaint?—There would be something the matter on both sides, I think.

9068. If they took full rent in case of sickness, would the workpeople then have a ground of complaint?—I think so.

9069. Sir *H. Halford.*] Have you any frames of your own?—No, they are all six Mr. Walker's.

9070. Is there any advantage with regard to workmen employed in making caps over those making stockings?—No, I do not know that there is.

9071. Do the caps admit of fashion; are they fashioned?—Yes, they are fashioned; we give so much for what we have done to them after we have got them off the frames.

9072. Are they only capable of being made on narrow frames?—They are striped, scarlet and blue; cotton.

9673. They require a narrow frame, do they not?—Yes, they require a narrow frame;

rame; neither rotatory nor other machinery could make that sort; they can nake white worsted, but not that sort.

9074. They cannot make them of that variety of colours?—No, they cannot.

9075. Mr. *Biggs.*] How many frames are there in Blaby?—About 300.

9076. They mostly work to Leicester, do they not?—Yes.

9077. You meet each other and see each other in Blaby, and if any cases were o occur or were common at Leicester of taking whole rent for half work, you vould necessarily hear of it?—I cannot answer for all warehouses.

9078. But you would hear of it?—Yes.

9079. And you have not heard of such cases?—I have not.

9080. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Can you give us the earnings of your workmen?—Yes, I can; I can earn 11 *s.* a week.

9081. Is that net?—Yes; I will average all my frames at that.

9082. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is that first hand?—First hand.

9083. That is, less a shilling rent, 10 *s.*?—Yes.

9084. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What have you a dozen for these caps?—One shilling nd eight pence a dozen.

9085. And how many dozen will be done in a week?—Six or seven dozen; even dozen; somewhere thereabouts; seven dozen as near as can be.

9086. Then the rent being a shilling a week, it is nearly 2 *d.* a dozen, not quite a penny three-farthings?—That is right.

9087. Suppose we say 2 *d.* a dozen, that would give you 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen on he net system?—Yes; it would.

9088. Do you see any difficulty in the workmen and the masters arranging pon a net scale of wages, say 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen instead of 1 *s.* 8 *d.*?—I should be vorse off; I should be 2 *d.* worse in the week.

9089. You pay that 2 *d.* now in the shape of rent, do you not?—Not so nuch.

9090. What difference would it make to you if, instead of receiving 1 *s.* 8 *d.*, you had 1 *s.* 6 *d.* paid, and no rent deducted?—I do not see that there would be much difference in it.

9091. Would it remove the cause of grievance on the part of the workmen?—I do not know; my trade is not like the wrought-hose trade; there are not many hands of our sort; perhaps 100 in Leicestershire.

9092. Mr. *Biggs.*] You do not particularly want a change?—No.

9093. You are quite indifferent whether you go on or change?—I do not see that any change would be for the better.

9094. Mr. *Gardner.*] What would be the effect of the net system upon the industrious and quick hands?—I do not know; it might affect them a little.

9095. In what way?—If they got more than the 12 *s.*; some might.

9096. Would it operate to the advantage of the quick hand, or the reverse?—I cannot say that.

9097. What would be the effect in the case of the slow hand?—Do you mean what would be the effect of the poundage system?

9098. Yes.—The slow hand would gain.

9099. And the quick hand, what would he do?—He might lose, if the poundage system was put on.

9100. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What should you put the slow hand at; would you say four dozen?—At different prices.

9101. I mean the quantity?—A slow hand would get perhaps 5 *s.* or 6 *s.*

9102. How many dozen would he make?—Four dozen of one-and-sixpenny.

9103. Then he would be 3 *d.* a dozen for rent?—Yes; it would be according o how the poundage was laid on.

9104. That would be 3 *d.* from 1 *s.* 8 *d.*?—Yes.

9105. That would leave him 1 *s.* 5 *d.* a dozen on the net system?—Yes.

9106. Then a quick hand, obtaining 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen net, would object to a net scale of wages at 1 *s.* 5 *d.*?—Yes, I should object to it, certainly.

9107. Mr. *Biggs.*] Because you would lose by it?—Yes.

9108. And the slow hand would gain?—Yes, and these slow hands are many of them women, and lads, and girls; we should get a good deal more than them, because how could we go on with our housekeeping if we did not? we always reckon on a boy, a girl, or a woman getting less than we do.

9109. Mr. *Gardner.*] What do you earn yourself, after paying your charges?—Nine shillings.

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9110. What do you put your wife's earnings down at?—I should think she will earn 7 *s.*

9111. Then you have four other journeymen?—Yes.

9112. What are their earnings?—There is a father and son; they will get 9 *s.* and 7 *s.*

9113. And what will the other two get?—The other two are women; they will get less; they will not get between them above 12 *s.*, I will say, or 14 *s.*

9114. About 6 *s.* or 7 *s.* each?—7 *s.* each, I will say; that is about it.

9115. Is this a kind of work that a woman can do as well as a man?—No; there is a deal of work in the stripping, and they are not so quick at it.

9116. Are there many able-bodied men working in that particular branch?—I should think there are not above 40 men.

9117. Are there a hundred hands at Blaby working on caps?—No, from 20 to 24.

9118. How many workmen are there at Blaby, of all sorts?—Three hundred.

9119. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I understand you to say, there are 100 in Leicestershire working on this particular cap branch?—Yes; I should say 100. Mr. Walker and Mr. Harris are the head masters in the village.

9120. Mr. *Gardner.*] You put down your average wages at 9 *s.*?—Yes.

9121. Will an able-bodied man earn more than that generally?—Sometimes; sometimes when Mr. Walker is busy with an order we work night and day, almost, and then we get more.

9122. Besides working in your frame, it is clear that superintending the labour of these other people takes up a great deal of your time?—Perhaps half an hour on Monday morning, and on Saturday when I take the work in.

9123. You say you earn 9 *s.* a week?—Yes.

9124. It is clear that one day is occupied out of your frame?—Yes; there are not above five working days for me.

9125. When do you get to your frame on Monday?—It may be at nine or ten o'clock on Monday, and I work till six or seven in the evening; I have a bit of an allotment to attend to, and I go up to that sometimes; I have about ten hundred; I grow a bit of wheat, and on seven hundred I have potatoes.

9126. Lord *J. Manners.*] The people who work under you do not, I suppose, get to work before you on Monday; they have to wait till you come in with the stuff, have they not?—I bring it in on Saturday.

9127. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you earn 9 *s.* a week besides hindering your time at Leicester on Saturday with the business of your other frames and attending to your allotment?—Yes.

9128. Do you attend to your allotment yourself?—Yes, I attend to it all myself.

9129. Did you ever consider how many hours in the week you pass in your frame?—I work in it from somewhere about five in the morning till nearly nine at night.

9130. When is this allotment business attended to?—On Monday or on Saturday, perhaps, when I come in from Leicester at 5 o'clock.

9131. I asked how many hours a week you pass in your frame, and you give me the longest day's work you do in one day; that will not do at all?—I should think 55 in the week.

9132. I suppose on some days you work a very long time, particularly when you are very busy?—Yes, when Mr. Walker has an order, I am closer at it.

9133. How long a time do you think you pass in your allotment?—For these last few weeks I have been there whenever I could.

9134. How much time do you think it occupies in the week?—Perhaps three hours in the week.

9135. Taking one week with another?—No; three or four weeks this time of the year, weeding my wheat and getting the potatoes moulded up, and such things as that.

9136. *Chairman.*] Have you any young boy you can put into your allotment?—No; I have only a daughter, about 20 years of age.

9137. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is the cap trade, as far as your knowledge goes, an increasing, a stationary, or a declining trade?—It has not varied much for these nine years. Mr. Walker keeps us on when there is a flatness of trade, but I think it is from having frame rents.

9138. Lord

9138. Lord *J. Manners.*] You make about 9*s.* a week, I think you say?—Yes.

9139. How much did you put the average earnings of your men at?—Twelve shillings and 7*s.*

9140. Is that after making all necessary deductions from them?—That is what I have when all is paid off, and when rent is paid.

9141. And the charges?—The charges, and everything.

9142. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are there any framework-knitters in Blaby employed upon hose?—I should think there are above 200.

9143. What is their condition, in comparison with the condition of those who are employed on caps; are they better or worse off?—Ours is rather the best trade.

9144. The cap trade is the best trade?—The cap and shirt trade.

9145. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is it better than the sham knit?—I hold that it is better.

9146. Sir *H. Halford.*] The caps are something of a fancy article, are they not?—Yes, they are very fanciful.

9147. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Does Mr. Harris conduct his business much in the same way as Mr. Walker does?—Yes. He does more in the shirt work than the cap work, a great deal, and all fancy goods.

9148. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are the shirts made on narrow frames?—In Blaby they are.

9149. Are there no wide frames in Blaby?—A few, not many.

9150. Mr. *Biggs.*] You do not think that the present system can be altered with any advantage to the workmen?—I do not think it would do much good; it is a burden now, but if we are burdened worse, it will be worse for us.

9151. Lord *J. Manners.*] You are speaking of your own branch of the trade?—Yes.

9152. Do you wish to express any opinion as to the other branches, or do you confine it to your own branch?—No, I cannot speak to that; I speak to my own.

9153. Mr. *Gardner.*] Living among a framework-knitting population, you must have a general impression as to what their feelings are with regard to legislation; you have told us that in your village they do not think it will do them any good?—They have told me so.

9154. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that very numerous petitions have been signed, I do not know from Blaby particularly, but from the hosiery district generally, and that great public demonstrations have been made from time to time against the present system. I want to know how, in your opinion, those petitions have been got up, provided what you say is true, that the workmen are indifferent with regard to this question?—Some of them are indifferent, and some of them wish to have it off, but they are not aware what will follow; our employers are masters of us; we cannot have what wages we please.

9155. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you think they have formed any clear conception of the result that would follow the abolition of the frame rents?—I do not think they have.

9156. Mr. *Gardner.*] They are under the impression, I suppose, that an Act of Parliament to abolish frame rents would have the effect of putting the sum now paid for rent into their pockets, and of thereby increasing their wages by that amount?—I think so; they say so.

9157. But you do not think so?—No; I think we shall be reduced in price.

9158. Sir *H. Halford.*] Has not that contrary opinion been encouraged by those interested in frame rents?—Yes.

9159. Are you aware of any considerable endeavours having been made to persuade the workmen that they will be no gainers by the abolition of frame rents?—I have heard many say that when there is a slack trade we shall be out of work, and worse off than we are now.

9160. Have you you any reason to believe that the workmen have been told by any persons interested in this agitation that the effect of legislation will be to put the money now paid for rent into their pockets?—I do not know that they have been told that; I never heard anything of it.

9161. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you seen any of the improved machinery in Leicester?—Yes; I have turned it for curiosity; it is turned with a handle; I have seen 12 hose at work, and have worked them myself. It is a bad concern; that is, for the stockingers.

Mr. *J. Freer.*

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9162. Why so?—I do believe it.

9163. Why?—Because the poor men would have more for their work if that machinery was knocked on one side.

9164. You think its effect will be to interfere with the employment of the old frames?—I think it is a very bad system for Leicester.

9165. Mr. *Gardner.*] You think it is at the bottom of the present lowness of wages?—Yes.

9166. And you think they will get lower and lower?—Yes.

9167. Mr. *Biggs.*] But you would not stop machinery by Act of Parliament, would you?—Your judgment is better than mine on that point.

9168. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Which would you consider most practicable: to legislate for the abolition of frame rents, or to legislate to stop the new machinery?—To legislate against machinery.

9169. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you not think that machinery cheapens production?—Yes, it does.

9170. Is not that an advantage to the public?—Certainly.

9171. When you can cheapen production, do you not increase the demand?—Yes.

9172. And do not people who work in the best machinery get the best wages?—Yes.

9173. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you not think that the consumers of stockings ought to have some little voice in the matter?—Yes; but they clog the markets up.

9174. *Chairman.*] It may be better for your children, but you feel it pinches yourself, do you not?—Yes.

9175. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you expect that the effect of the improved machinery will be something like that produced by the railways on the old coaches; that the old machinery will be driven off the road?—They are not driven off, but they will be, if machinery goes on as it does.

9176. Your employment is in a domestic manufacture, which is carried on in your own house, and in your village?—It is.

9177. Do you think the workmen generally would like the prospect of having to leave their villages and go into the towns?—I do not think they would like to leave their allotments and places.

9178. Mr. *Biggs.*] The rent of the cottage they occupy is generally low, I believe?—Very low; I get a little house and shop for 1 *s.* 4 *d.* a week.

9179. *Chairman.*] What do you pay for your allotment?—Two shillings and a penny a hundred; it is a good bit of light land.

9180. Do you mean a hundred yards?—A hundred yards.

9181. Mr. *Gardner.*] You make the allotment answer your purpose?—Yes; there could not be a better thing spread over England than that.

9182. Have most of the people allotments in Blaby?—Most of them.

9183. How long has that been the case?—Eight years,

9184. Who originated the system?—Mr. Hoskin, of Blaby.

9185. He is the rector, is he not?—Yes.

9186. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have any of your journeymen these allotments?—One man has 1,800; and he has a lad, a son, to help him.

9187. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is that one of your journeymen?—Yes.

9188. That is a third of an acre?—Yes.

9189. How much does this journeyman of yours, who has a third of an acre to attend to, earn?—He has a son who helps him, so he does not have much fatigue with it.

9190. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is this journeyman a householder?—Yes.

9191. What does he grow upon his allotment?—Wheat and potatoes, and sometimes a little bit of barley. He keeps a pig in the winter.

9192. Does the son who works in the allotment work in the frame at all?—Yes, he works on one of my frames.

9193. The father and the son together, besides their labour in the frame, work upon their allotment, do they?—Yes, but not many hours at a time; very little.

9194. Are you sufficiently acquainted with the villages in your neighbourhood, to say whether the allotment system prevails there?—It does.

9195. Is it general?—Yes.

9196. And how long has that allotment system been carried out generally in Leicestershire?—It has been carried out there for more years than I have been in Blaby.

Blaby. I think Sir Henry Halford was almost the first man that begun with that allotment at Newton, the little village he owns, according to what I heard. Mr. *J. Freer.*

9197. Mr. *Biggs.*] It is a system that gives great satisfaction to the working classes, is it not?—It is; it is a very good system indeed. 29 June 1855.

9198. Mr. *Gardner.*] Particularly at the present prices?—Yes; it gives many things for the winter, potatoes especially.

9199. What is the favourite article of produce that they raise in those allotments?—Potatoes.

9200. What is the largest allotment that you know any man hold who at all works steadily in a frame?—Half an acre is about the largest, I think; from 500 yards to half an acre.

9201. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you ever ascertained whether you could grow potatoes cheaper than you could purchase them?—We could not purchase them cheaper; allotment is a very good thing for us; I know every one will uphold that.

9202. Mr. *Biggs.*] Because the time you employ in that allotment ground you probably would not employ in a frame?—You are right.

9203. And the change is conducive to health?— Yes; we want a little exercise sometimes.

9204. Mr. *Gardner.*] You would not be in favour of a system which would bring people into factories in towns?—No; I do not think it would be a good system at all; it would bring many people on the poor rates of the town, in a town like Leicester.

9205. Do you think that the abolition of rent and charges by Act of Parliament would have the effect of collecting people in the town?—Yes; they would have little factories built.

9206. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have there been any narrow frames made or built within your recollection?—No; I do not know of any.

9207. You think that the number of narrow frames is rather declining yearly than otherwise?—I think so.

George Sanderson, called in; and Examined.

9208. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you belong to?—Whetstone, near Leicester. *G. Sanderson.*

9209. What are you by business?—A stocking maker.

9210. Mr. *Gardner.*] For whom do you work?—For Messrs. Walker and Kempson.

9211. *Chairman.*] Is that the same firm that Mr. Freer has been speaking of?—No.

9212. Mr. *Gardner.*] How long have you worked for your present employers?—Ten or 12 years.

9213. You are a knitter of sham-knit hose I believe?—Yes.

9214. That, I am afraid, is the lowest paid branch, is it not?—I am afraid it is the lowest branch belonging to the trade; the very worst, I believe.

9215. How do you account for that?—Through the machinery a great deal.

9216. The competition of better machinery?—Yes, and if it was in my power I would soon stop it.

9217. Mr. *Biggs.*] You would stop the machinery?—Yes, I would, the large machinery, for it is my opinion that it will ruin us and our children after us.

9218. Mr. *Gardner.*] You think the low rate of wages in your branch of the trade is owing, not to the mode in which the payment of your wages is made, the rent and charges being deducted, but that it is owing entirely to the competition of improved machinery?—Yes, I do think so.

9219. Have you any other frames besides those which you work yourself?—Yes, I have a shop of 10 frames.

9220. Do you work in one of them yourself?—Yes.

9221. What do you consider your average earnings to be?—My average earnings, I should say, were about 9 *s.* a week.

9222. What do you consider to be the deductions?—There is 1 *s.* a frame for the manufacturer and 6 *d.* for me, 3 *d.* for standing, and 6 *d.* for taking in the work to Leicester on the Saturday, and bringing the work back again.

9223. The standing you pay to yourself in fact?—Yes.

9224. But of course you charge the journeymen who put their frames into your house a certain proportion of the rent?—Threepence per frame.

G. Sanderson.

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9225. Which, I suppose, is not an exorbitant charge?—No; it is such a charge as the journeymen are satisfied with.

9226. Mr. *Biggs.*] The journeymen, you say, are satisfied with it?—Yes.

9227. Mr. *Gardner.*] And your 3 *d.* for taking in you consider is only a fair remuneration?—Nobody could do it for less; the carrier will want 9 *d.* for taking in the lot.

9228. Mr. *Biggs.*] And for that 3 *d.* a frame you superintend, find shop-room, go to Leicester and fetch out the stuff, and take the hose back?—Yes.

9229. If the journeymen were to do it themselves it would cost them more, would it not?—Yes; and it would hinder their time too.

9230. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is there any other deduction?—Yes, there is stitching.

9231. How much is that?—Tenpence.

9232. Mr. *Mundy.*] Is that the same as seaming?—Yes.

9233. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is there any other deduction?—No; what other there is they pay themselves.

9234. What would their seaming cost them?—Tenpence.

9235. Tenpence from 7*s.* 6*d.* would leave 6*s.* 8*d.* as the net wages?—Yes.

9236. Would that be for an ablebodied workman?—Yes; there are plenty of ablebodied men; then there are candles and needles in the winter time besides that.

9237. Lord *J. Manners.*] How much do you put that at?—Sixpence.

9238. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What class of goods were they working on this new machinery that you spoke of when you saw it?—Sham knits.

9239. Where was the machinery that you saw?—At Leicester.

9240. Was it working by steam?—No, by hand.

9241. Was it worked by females, or by ablebodied men?—I saw both females and ablebodied men working at it.

9242. Did you inquire what they were earning?—No, I do not know anything about that; they were earning a great deal more than we can, by what I can learn.

9243. What has been the rumour?—I have heard that they can get more money than I can.

9244. How much?—Half as much more, or more than that.

9245. So that whilst you complain of the operation of that machinery, those parties, earning one-half more, do not complain?—No; they are better off.

9246. Mr. *Gardner.*] The wages of people working on those machines have been previously stated to be from 12*s.* to 20*s.*?—Yes; but whether they get that or not I do not know.

9247. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If you came to ask Parliament to stop that machinery by legislation, these parties, I suppose, would come and ask that it should not be stopped; they would oppose you?—Yes.

9248. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are the goods that are produced by this machinery equal in quality to those produced by hand?—They look as good in the legs, but when you come to examine the feet, they are not worth anything.

9249. Are you aware what is their real quality when you come to use them?—I have never worn them; the feet are not so good generally, I think.

9250. Did you ever see any of them after they had been washed?—No.

9251. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Could that machinery produce many more dozens in the week than your own frame?—Yes.

9252. Then they would be made at a less price than you could make them at?—Yes.

9253. Being made for less, and offered for less in the market, they would secure a demand?—Yes.

9254. What do you think would be the ultimate effect upon your one frame?—I am afraid we shall work in them till we are stopped altogether through machinery.

9255. Even if you remained at the frame, and worked for 3*s.* a week instead of 6*s.*?—If we did, we should be reduced to make them as low as they make them in the low machinery.

9256. Mr. *Biggs.*] Would it not be wise to take to some other employment in that case?—Yes, but I do not know where to go, for we are so numerous.

9257. Mr. *Gardner.*] Were you ever in London before?—No.

9258. You never came up by a horse and coach, did you?—No. All the able-bodied

bodied men in our neighbourhood are obliged to work in the stocking frames; there is nothing else for them.

9259. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is there no employment upon the land for you?—No; in the winter time there are often many labourers who have nothing to do.

9260. Mr. *Biggs.*] Could you not come to Leicester, and work in the wide frames?—I do not think Leicester would hold us all.

9261. Do you know whether the same objection that you now make against this wide machinery was made against the stocking frame itself, when it was first introduced?—I have heard so.

9262. Do you know that there was an objection made by the court of James or Elizabeth to patronizing the stocking frame, because it would throw the knitters out of employment?—I have heard some talk about that, but I do not know anything about it myself.

9263. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you not think that coach proprietors and drivers have great cause to complain, because railways have put them out of employment, and swept their trade away, thereby making their capital perfectly useless to the industry of all persons connected with the conveyance of the public by that means?—I think so.

9264. Do you think it would be a benefit to the public in general if they were to give up the railways and return to the old system of travelling?—I do not know; there are many who complain about the railways.

9265. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think it would be a good thing to give up the stocking frames altogether, and go back to knitting pins?—I do not know anything about that.

9266. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you think that if deductions by frame rents and charges were to be done away with, it would prevent the competition of the new machinery, and its having the effect you have ascribed to it?—I do not think it would; I think it is the machinery that has hurt us a great deal; that is my firm opinion.

9267. You think that the cause of depression in your trade is not so much the effect of frame rents and charges as it is the effect of this new machinery?—That is my opinion about it; it is the machinery that has brought us to it, in a great measure.

9268. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you wish for legislation upon this subject of frame rents, or would you rather wish to continue as you are?—I do not think that legislation would do any good, though I admit that the frame rents are too high.

9269. But you think it doubtful what would be the result of a change?—Yes; some journeymen who are with us would like to have it off, I believe; but then they think that they should be benefited by it.

9270. In what way do they think they would be benefited by the frame rent being taken off?—What they think, I have no doubt, is, that they should put the rent into their own pockets; but I do not think that would be the effect of it.

9271. Mr. *Gardner.*] The men would like any legislation upon this subject if the effect of it would be to put 1 *s.* a week into their pockets; is that what you mean to say?—Yes.

9272. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Suppose they did not get that 1 *s.*, would their condition, according to your idea, be improved at all?—No.

9273. Would the abolition of these frame rents and charges remove a source of dissatisfaction in the minds of the men, if you were working on the net system?—I think not.

9274. Mr. *Gardner.*] Not unless they obtained more wages?—No; I am sure of that.

9275. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you acquainted with the value of frames?—It is according to what they are.

9276. I mean, what is the value of a good frame, capable of producing good work?—It must be a good one to be worth 5 *l.*

9277. What is the ordinary rent of a frame?—One shilling.

9278. Do you not think that 1 *s.* a week for a thing worth 5 *l.* is a large deduction to make from a man earning the scanty wages that a man does earn in your trade?—I think it is too high; but I do not know that any of them want to work in a frame without paying some rent.

9279. Mr. *Biggs.*] You do not expect that the hosiers would let their frames for nothing?—No.

9280. Why do you think the rents are too high?—I do not know.

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9281. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is it not because the supply of labour is so redundant in that business, that the workmen are very much at the mercy of the employers?—Yes.

9282. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you not think it is connected with the ease with which a stoppage is made out of wages; may not that have something to do with it?—I do not know whether it would make any difference; they could reduce the work all the same, and there is no doubt that some of them would, and get more.

9283. *Chairman.*] You mean they might reduce the price of the work, do you not?—Yes.

9284. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What have you per dozen for your work?—We work different sorts.

9285. Give me one kind?—Three shillings.

9286. And how many dozen, at that price, could you do in a week?—Three dozen, and some hands will do four dozen; I give the average price, 9 *s.* for three dozen.

9287. Then you pay 1 *s.* rent for producing three dozen of hose?—Yes.

9288. That is fourpence a dozen?—Yes.

9289. Now, supposing this rent were to be done away with by Act of Parliament, do you think the price would be 2 *s.* 8 *d.*, or 3 *s.*, as it is now?—I do not think it would be 3 *s.*

9290. Are you afraid it would be less than 2 *s.* 8 *d.*?—I am afraid it would not be 2 *s.* 8 *d.*

9291. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are they not at the mercy of the employers, who might reduce it below 2 *s.* 8 *d.*?—They might.

9292. Mr. *Biggs.*] If you did not make your present charges, which seem to me to be exceedingly moderate, and if charges were to be altogether abolished, how would you propose to repay yourself?—If I was not allowed to take them, and the journeymen would not agree with me to receive something less than was paid to me, I must shut up frames, and just keep one for myself and my children.

9293. If the charges in their present form were to be abolished, do you think that there is any other mode by which you could be remunerated, except that of having one price at the warehouse, you paying to the workmen a smaller sum than you receive?—That is how things must be if the frame rents should be taken off.

9294. Do you not think that there are men who would reduce the journeymen to a lower condition than that in which they are at the present moment?—I believe that.

9295. So that they would be more at the mercy of the middlemen?—Yes; if a man is that way given, he will grind a journeyman under any system.

9296. Sir *H. Halford.*] You have no frames of your own?—Yes, I have two.

9297. And you get 1 *s.* a week rent for them?—I have two children of my own who work in them.

9298. So that you save the rent with regard to those frames?—Yes.

9299. Lord *J. Manners.*] You have 10 frames altogether working to Messrs. Walker & Kempson?—Yes.

9300. You have told us that the average earnings of these men would be about 6 *s.* 2 *d.* a week?—Yes.

9301. That is, I suppose, if they get full work during the week?—Yes.

9302. Do you know what Messrs. Walker & Kempson's practice is, if any of these people fall sick?—They do not take any rent.

9303. Are they ever obliged to put them on stint?—Sometimes; but not very often; but if they give them half work, they take half rent.

9304. If they did not do that, and if they took full rent in cases of sickness or during stint, do you think those people would be worse off than they are now?—Yes, they would be then.

9305. Have you ever heard of such a case?—No, I have not.

9306. Not in your part of Leicestershire?—I do not know that I ever did from anywhere; not to my recollection.

9307. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware whether many of the middlemen are owners of frames?—Not our road; I do not think there are any.

9308. The frames are mostly the property of the manufacturers?—Yes, they are our road, where I come from.

9309. Your three children work in frames that are your own property?—Yes.

9310. And your own frame is your own property?—I pay rent for it.

9311. *Chairman.*] Has Mr. Walker ever made any objection to your children working at frames not belonging to him?—No.

9312. Or has he ever asked anything in the shape of an allowance for it?—No.

9313. Mr. *Cheetham.*] At what age do your children commence working?—About 12 years of age.

9314. Before that do they go to school?—Not afterwards.

9315. But before, they do?—Yes, before they do.

9316. Do the stockingmakers generally send their children to school?—Not generally; they have not the means of doing it.

9317. Do they send them to the Sunday schools?—Yes, generally; that is a general thing with them.

9318. Mr. *Biggs.*] Have you an allotment?—Yes, of about seven hundred and a half, and I wish I had seven hundred more.

9319. Mr. *Mundy.*] What do you pay for it?—Two shillings and one penny a hundred.

9320. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you prefer your domestic employment in a country village to coming into Leicester; would you rather stay in Wigston than come to Leicester?—Yes.

9321. You would not come into Leicester unless you were driven by necessity to do so, or unless you had some very strong reason?—I would not.

9322. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are the workpeople whom you employ out of your own family men, women, or children?—Three of them are men.

9323. Of what ages?—There is one about 45, and another about 30, I think.

9324. Are they all ablebodied men?—Yes.

9325. And the others?—Then there is one boy, and one girl, and one woman.

9326. Can the woman earn as much as the men?—Very nearly. She is a very good hand for a woman; all women cannot do that.

9327. Can children or growing lads, or girls of 15 or 16, do as much?—No; some may, and some cannot; there is a great difference in the hands.

9328. Is there a great difference between the value of the labour of an ablebodied man and an average woman?—No; not a great deal.

9329. Have you ever considered what the effect of the poundage system would be upon quick hands and slow hands respectively?—Yes, the quick hands would have the most to pay, and the slow hands would gain by it.

9330. The quick hand, or the hand that did the most work, you say would be a loser?—Yes.

9331. While the slow or idle hand would be a gainer; is that so?—But there are some men who are very slow, but still, for all that, they are not idle.

9332. The slow or idle hand would gain?—Yes.

9333. The hand who does not do so much work would be the gainer?—Yes.

9334. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you see any difficulty in adopting the poundage or net system between the master and the workmen, if they choose?—No.

9335. Mr. *Gardner.*] But you do not approve of the poundage system?—No, it would do for some, and for some it would not.

9336. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Could you not get over that difficulty by taking an average of the quantity produced; could you not agree to some net price that would be applicable to all parties?—I do not know; it would not be so straightforward as it is at present.

9337. Mr. *Biggs.*] It would be less satisfactory than the present system, would it not?—I think so.

9338. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you been brought up to the frame ever since you were a boy?—Yes.

9339. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you not think the net system would create a great deal of confusion about the wages to be paid to the workmen?—I think it would.

9340. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are the charges that are made generally known among the workmen?—Yes, they are known before they begin to work in our villages; they know what they will have to receive on Saturday night as well as the man who goes to take the work in. I dare say the journeymen reckon it up, as soon as they begin to work, what they mean to do; and they know that if they do do it, then they will have that money on Saturday night.

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9341. Is there any deduction taken off beyond what the workmen know of beforehand?—Not if the work is made according to order.

9342. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are they always acquainted with the price that is paid at the warehouse?—They might be; if they do not know it then the fault is with themselves.

9343. Can those workmen who do not work direct to the warehouse, but who work through middlemen, always with a certainty ascertain the price paid at the warehouse?—Yes.

9344. By what means?—They might know without going out of the village.

9345. By conferring among themselves?—Yes; there are many other men who work to the warehouses from the villages; most of them do; in fact, with regard to Messrs. Walker & Kempson, there are five others who work to the same warehouse, and if they wanted to know the price paid at the warehouse, and went to those men, they would, I have no doubt, tell them the truth.

9346. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you had any new frames commenced in your neighbourhood?—Not that I am aware of.

9347. So that you do not know that the trade is extending in your district?—No, I do not know that there have been any new frames.

9348. Mr. *Wickham.*] You stated that you earned net 6*s.* 3*d.* a week?—Yes.

9349. How many hours did you work in the week to obtain that?—Thirteen or fourteen hours a day for five days.

9350. Mr. *Gardner.*] You have expressed an opinion that legislative interference with the present system would not be beneficial; do you think that that opinion is shared by the majority of the working people in Leicestershire?—Not altogether; there are some who are for having it off, and some not; because some of them think they would be benefited.

9351. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is not the opinion prevailing among the middlemen generally, is it?—I do not know, I am sure, about that.

9352. Lord *J. Manners.*] You are a middleman yourself, are you not?—Yes; I am a man who has a shop and work frames.

9353. Mr. *Gardner.*] You are a knitter also?—Yes.

9354. Lord *J. Manners.*] Have most of the stocking-makers in your village allotments?—Many of them have.

9355. Do you think that if there were no allotments, the stocking-makers could go on?—I do not know; they are very good things for the stockingers; I wish there were more of them. We have not had them more than three years at Wigston.

9356. Mr. *Gardner.* Who originated it in your neighbourhood?—Mr. Hine.

9357. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you think that if the allotments were taken away, the stockingers could go on?—They might go on in one way or another, but they would not be so well without them as they are with them.

9358. Mr. *Gardner.*] They have no allotments in Leicester, and yet they go on there?—Yes.

9359. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you know Leicester?—Yes.

9360. Have they not got allotments in and about Leicester?—Some of them have.

9361. Have they not turned into allotments a great piece of ground in the middle of the town?—I do not know anything about that. I know the common; whether that is called the allotments or not I do not know, but that is all turned up for gardens.

9362. This is within the last few years?—Yes.

9363. Mr. *Gardner.*] You do not know the number of allotments that there are in Leicester?—No, I do not; but I know it is a great piece of ground.

9364. What do you think it is that has induced a great number of people to sign the petitions to Parliament, and to make public demonstrations in favour of legislative interference with frame rents?—I do not know that I ever signed one, or heard anything about one.

9365. Have you never heard of petitions going about for signature?—I do not know that I have.

9366. Are you not aware that, at all events, there is apparently a feeling among the workmen (whether a majority or not, I do not know, you are better able to judge of that than I can be) in favour of the abolition of frame rents and charges

by

by Act of Parliament?—I have heard of that; but I do not know whether there is a majority in favour of it or not.

9367. But you have heard that there is a certain amount of excitement upon the subject?—Yes.

9368. Under what impression do you think that excitement has arisen; what do you imagine the workmen think would be the result of legislative interference?—Some of them think they will be better off, and some think otherwise.

9369. But all those who are in favour of legislative interference think they would better off, I suppose?—Yes, of course they do.

9370. Sir *H. Halford.*] I understand you to say you are the owner of two frames yourself?—Yes.

9371. What did you give for them?—I do not know that I can tell you; I bought them of Mr. Walker.

9372. How much did they cost you; can you not say?—I paid a shilling a week for two years.

9373. For the two?—For the two.

9374. A shilling a week for two years, and for that you possess now two frames?—Yes.

9375. Mr. *Mundy.*] Have any petitions ever been carried about Wigston?—I do not remember any.

William Stafford, called in; and Examined.

9376. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you come from?—Leicester.

9377. Are you a Framework-knitter there?—Yes.

9378. Are you on your own account, or have you people working under you?—I work along with a master man myself; a middleman.

9379. What is his name?—William March.

9380. What warehouse does he work to?—Mr. John Baines's.

9381. Mr. *Gardner.*] Is it the custom at the warehouse to take full rent for half work?—No, I never paid it yet; none of us ever did pay full money for half work.

9382. You mean that it has not merely not happened to you yourself, but it is not the case at all with Mr. Baines's workmen?—Not at all.

9383. How is it in cases of sickness?—When anybody who works in his frame is sick, if he is let to know that he is sick, the frame rent is not taken for the time; that I am sure of; I have seen instances of it several times when I have been there having the work taken in myself, both in his factory and at his other place as well.

9384. Mr. Baines is a large manufacturer, is he not?—He has a large factory where he keeps many of his frames, and he has a good many out.

9385. Is it the general custom of the trade in Leicester, do you think, to exact full rent when only half work is given out?—Never where I have worked to. I worked along with another man about 17 or 18 years, and the employer never took any rent at all when anybody was ill.

9386. But my question is: is it, in your opinion, the general custom of the trade to take full rent where only half work is given out?—Yes, I think it is; but there are some individuals who do not take it.

9387. Is it the general custom of the trade, do you think, to take full rent in cases of sickness?—No.

9388. If frame rents and charges were to be abolished by Act of Parliament, do you think you would be paid the same price for your work that you are now?—I am greatly afraid we never should.

9389. Have you considered the question at all?—Yes.

9390. With reference to legislative interference?—Yes.

9391. Give us your opinion upon that subject, if you please?—I have considered that over many times, and have had arguments about it.

9392. Tell us what you think about it?—In the first place, if frame rents were abolished, the hosier would take something off the work to maintain the expenses of his frame; that I think first of all; and in the next place, a middleman could not look after the work, and fetch the stuff out; it would hinder his time; he could not give out the seaming, and give out the stuff to the men all the week, and then do it up, take it to the warehouse on the Saturday, and bring the money down; he could not do all that without receiving some remuneration for it; we

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pay that remuneration now, but if the frame rents were to be abolished, I think it would make it worse for us.

9393. Are you of opinion that if these frame rents were abolished by Act of Parliament, the master middlemen would have it in their power to remunerate themselves to a greater extent than the sum which those rents and charges represent?—Yes.

9394. And that the tendency would be rather to lower wages than to raise them?—Yes.

9395. But what do the framework-knitters of Leicester think would be the effect of legislative interference?—Few of them think they would be worse off if the frame rent and charges were abolished than they are now, because they think the hosiers would take so much more poundage, and the middlemen would take more than the frame rents come to at this present time; it would lie very bad then if they were to take the money, which we will say is 2 *d.* or so in the 1 *s.*, as it has been talked about; then, if a man was a bad working man and worked regular time in these big frames, which pay more than these narrow frames, he would pay a great deal more; I can well say myself that he would pay a great deal more.

9396. Sir *H. Halford.*] Upon what is that opinion founded?—My opinion is, that when the men have the work given out to them, they do not know what the price is in the warehouse; then the master stockinger fetches out the work, and when he fetches it out, he gives the journeyman just what he thinks proper.

9397. You mean that is the practice now?—That is the practice now, and it will be more so when the frame rents and charges are taken off.

9398. You think then, that in point of fact, the workmen do not at present know the warehouse price?—No, they never do.

9399. Then you differ altogether from the former witness on that question?—No, I do not.

9400. You heard what he said, did you not; you were in the room when the last witness was examined?—Yes.

9401. Did he not say, in answer to a question of mine, that the workmen always knew the warehouse price?—They do not; I am sure they do not.

9402. Then you think the middleman obtains an advantage in the difference between the price he receives and the price he pays to the workman?—Yes, he has.

9403. Do you think that is fair and proper?—No, it is not fair.

9404. But it is done?—Yes, it is done; I am sure that there are not half the men in Leicester who are journeymen who know the warehouse prices.

9405. So that, in addition to the stoppage on account of taking in, the middleman gains an advantage by the difference between the price he pays and the price he receives?—Yes, he does.

9406. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say the workmen do not know the warehouse price; but might they not know it, if they had any reason to suppose they were imposed on, by going to the warehouse and asking the price?—They mght, if those at the warehouses were all like a few individuals that there are in Leicester; because there are a few that will tell them the prices, and there are others who will not, and will not have anything to do with journeymen; they say they must go back again, and look to the master they work with.

9407. Sir *H. Halford.*] That is the answer that is commonly given at the warehouse, is it?—They must go to the middleman.

9408. What you mean is, that if a workman goes to the warehouse in order to make himself acquainted with the price paid at the warehouse, he will not get that information, but will be referred to the middleman?—Yes; there are some warehouses in Leicester where, when you go to ask them the price of the work, they will tell you the whole prices of the work, and some of them will not do so.

9409. Mr. *Gardner.*] But, after all, the middleman is the person with whom the workman contracts, is he not?—Yes, that is what I say.

9410. The workman always knows what the middleman is going to give him, at all events?—Yes, that is what I say.

9411. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Is there any published list of prices?—Not at this present time; there used to be one, but there is not one now.

9412. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are you aware that there was a law passed sometime ago with a view to secure a ticket being given when work was given out?—Yes, there was.

9413. But

9413. But that has not been acted on?—It has not at all.

9414. Do you think it would be a good thing if it were acted on?—I do not exactly know about that; if they are disposed to punish you, they will punish you, let the consequence be what it will, and let what Act you like come in force; the middlemen will do so more than the hosiers, I am confident, and I have proved it.

9415. You think it is quite hopeless to attempt to resist the practices which are pursued by the middlemen?—I should like to know the means by which a middleman is to be bound down to do the thing that is right.

9416. Are you content to remain in such an abject condition as that which you describe?—I am very well content to remain in this kind of way; that is, to keep the frame rent and charges on, and go on in the course we are in, if we can go and ask the hosiers in the town of Leicester, and learn from them the prices.

8417. You think that the object most to be desired is, that there should be the means of information with regard to the warehouse prices?—Yes.

8418. Mr. *Biggs.*] You think, do you not, that if frame rents and charges were abolished, there would be two prices immediately, one the price paid by the warehouse to the middleman, and the other the price paid by him to the workman?—Yes.

8419. And also that some of the middlemen would take more from the journeymen than others would?—Yes.

8420. That would create an irregularity and insecurity, would it not?—Yes; it has been the case from your firm; you know the trouble we have had with different middlemen working to your firm; but we could come to your warehouse and could always have a straightforward answer from you; but then, if we go to other warehouses in the town, we are not able to get a straightforward answer from half of them.

9421. *Chairman.*] They will not tell you the price they are paying at the warehouse?—That gentlemen (Mr. Biggs) will tell you so.

9422. Half of them, you say, will not tell you?—They will not.

9423. Mr. *Gardner.*] I suppose they say, "We have nothing to do with you; you have made no bargain with us, but your bargain is with a third party"?—That is it; Mr. John Baines will tell us the prices, and Mr. John Corah will tell us.

9424. It is very right, as a matter of courtesy, that they should do so; but do you think there is any further obligation upon them to tell you; you do not make any bargain with them you know?—We cannot compel them to tell us.

9425. Your bargain is with the middleman?—Yes.

9426. *Chairman.*] You think it is but fair, do you not, that any man having the information you want should enable you to get that information also to guide you in your own bargain?—If you could get that information from the hosiers, so as to know their prices, we could stand better with the middleman to get our remuneration from him.

9427. It is no loss to the manufacturer to tell you, and by giving you that information you would be enabled to get a more truthful bargain struck with the middleman?—Just so.

9428. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Are these charges always the same?—Yes, the charges are always the same in all places, I believe.

9429. Your complaint is not that the rent and charges, but what you complain of is the uncertainty you are in as to the price given at the warehouse for the work?—Yes.

9430. Sir *H. Halford.*] But among the charges there always is one under the name of "taking in," which is understood to be the compensation to the middleman for his trouble?—Yes.

9431. And the understanding also is that he is not entitled to any further remuneration by the difference of price?—The middleman takes so much for every frame.

9432. For the taking in?—For the taking in and standing and winding, and all together; it is all comprised together.

9433. And your complaint is that besides that he takes advantage of you by paying you a different price from that which he receives from the warehouse?—Yes.

9434. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you work direct to the warehouse, or do you work to a middleman?—I work to a middleman; I work in the shop.

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9435. What has led you to suppose that the middleman has not been giving you the same price that he receives from the warehouse?—It is not at the present time; at the present time I know I have about the price, because I often take the work in myself to two or three warehouses that we work to.

9436. Then you were referring to other times than the present?—Yes. There is Mr. Baines, we work to him; and we have made a deal for Mr. Mitchell.

9437. Mr. *Biggs.*] If your employer gave you a different price from that which they gave at the warehouse, you would find it out, would you not?—Yes, I should at this time.

9438. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you consider that the trade could be carried on without middlemen?—It could not.

9439. You do not object, then, to middlemen?—No, I do not; but I consider that they should take a fair wage for their labour.

9440. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you think that, as a rule, their charges are excessive?—Yes.

9441. Which of them?—What they charge openly they cannot do much with.

9442. Mr. *Gardner.*] You mean that the usual charges are regular, and well known?—Yes, throughout the town.

9443. But they get a profit upon the difference between the price paid at the warehouse and that which they pay to the workmen?—Yes.

9444. Is it not the business of the workman, in the bargain which he makes with the middleman, as it would be in the case of all other bargains, to see that he gets as much as he can?—They cannot do that, for the hosiers will not tell them what they give to the middleman as the price of the work.

9445. Mr. *Biggs.*] But you say that, in the case of the three warehouses to which you sometimes take in work for your master, the prices given to you are the same as the prices given at the shop?—Yes.

9446. If in these cases you can prove it is not so, what reason have you for thinking it is otherwise generally?—I know it by the prices which at the present time are given to men working in other shops.

9447. Do you think that if a hosier knew that the middlemen he employed under the present system were giving the workmen less than they gave at the warehouse, they would be satisfied, and allow it?—They have been tried; they have been asked the warehouse price, and they have told the workmen who asked them to go back, and go to the middlemen they worked under.

9448. Mr. *Gardner.*] Considering that the sytem of employing middlemen is open to such great abuses, what are the reasons which, in your opinion, make it necessary, nevertheless, to keep it up; why cannot the trade be carried on without middlemen?—I will explain that as well as I can: you understand, I dare say, so far as this: if a hosier was to employ 200 frames, and he had 200 hands to work them, how could he give the stuff out, and take the work in; then, in the next place, there shall be five or ten master middlemen to those 200 frames; every one shall have 20 frames apiece; well, the workmen shall pay them a sum of 1 *s.*, that being what they charge besides the frame rent; then every 20 frames would maintain one man well, and while that man was earning that 1 *s.* the workman would lose 3 *s.* on some sorts of work if he took it in to the warehouse himself. I will speak of myself as an instance; I go out on Monday morning; I have not got my stuff till dinner time; then on the Saturday by the forenoon I must give over work, and take in what work I have done; whereas if I was paying a middleman I should be at work on Monday, and be at work on Saturday till he came back from the warehouse, and I should earn half-a-crown or 3 *s.* in that time.

9449 It is also, I suppose, found necessary for the manufacturer to have some person responsible for the materials he gives out?—Yes.

9450. I suppose that in the absence of some check, there are some journeymen who would make away with it?—That is right; there are many who do now.

9451. It requires some care and attention on the part of the middleman, I suppose, though it is his special business, to guard against such a proceeding on the part of some journeymen?—Yes.

9452. Sir *H. Halford.*] How would it be do you suppose, if the manufacturer paid the middleman himself, instead of leaving it to the workmen to pay him?—I do not know.

9453. Mr. *Biggs.*] The manufacturer would give less wages in that case, would e not?—Yes.

9454. He could not pay the middleman and give the same wages as those hich he is giving at present?—No.

9455. Sir *H. Halford.*] Would it be necessary, do you think, to give as much ess as would be equal to what the middleman obtains?—I do not know; we ould get our money sooner and more regularly if he would pay the same price, nd if the charges were taken off we should be so much better.

9456. You would in that case be exempt from these abuses which you impute the middlemen?—Yes.

9457. Mr. *Mundy.*] Have you always worked to a middleman?—No, I had ames of my own; but one master failed and the other died; that was Mr. Thornon and Mr. Toon.

9458. And then you went back to a middleman?—Yes.

9459. Why did you not work direct to the warehouse if you found so much ncertainty with regard to the middlemen?—The reason why I gave the frames p was, because I did not like the bore of them; I never robbed or plundered a an out of a halfpenny in all my life in regard to working, taking in, or any one hing; work was good at that time, and I would not be bothered with the frames or the other shilling. I could always sit up my frame and make more money han I could make in that way.

9460. Mr. *Biggs.*] Your opinion is, that a middleman can perform all the ervices you have been describing cheaper for a journeyman than a journeyman an do them for himself?—Yes.

9461. And if he is a fair dealing man, he is an advantage rather than otherise to the journeyman?—Yes, he is: it is a greater advantage to any man to ave his stuff fetched out and his work taken in for him, though he pays for it, han it would be if he did it himself.

9462. Have you seen any of the new machinery?—Yes, I have.

9463. Are you favourable to the progress of machinery, or are you against t?—I am sadly against it; for I believe it is that that is ruining us.

9464. It is reducing wages?—Yes.

9465. Do you not think that improved machinery is an advantage to the public; loes it not cheapen production?—Yes; but on the other hand, it runs down vages.

9466. It runs down the wages of those who are employed on the old machines, ut it gives better wages to those who work the new machinery, does it not?—I lo not know.

9467. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You have not made inquiries upon that point?—No.

9468. You see that its operation in your own case will be probably to throw our own frames out of occupation?—Yes.

9469. And you do not like the prospect of that?—No; it has kept me out of vork several weeks this winter, when I should have been at work but for that. We always made a great deal of straight-down cotton hose in winter; but last vinter we did not, on account of this new machinery.

9470. How long has this new machinery been in operation at Leicester?—Two r three years, I believe.

9471. Is its employment, to your knowledge, increasing or otherwise?—It is ncreasing. At Nottingham the round frames are going down rather; they are ather declining.

9472. Mr. *Biggs.*] Would you stop the progress of machinery then, by Act of Parliament?—I do not know; I do not know how we could meddle with it.

9473. You think it would hardly be fair or proper to stop the progress of invention?—It would be fair if you could do it in any form.

9474. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You would let those who are working in this new machinery have a voice in it as well as yourself, would you not?—I should like for hem all to have a voice.

9475. If you asked Parliament to stop the new machinery, they would ask, probably, that it should not be stopped?—I do not know.

9476. If you asked Parliament to stop the new machinery, you would be putting a stop to the ingenuity of the mechanic, would you not?—It certainly would hurt the mechanics a great deal.

9477. So that whichever way you look at it you see that it is a question of great

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great difficulty, not only to yourself but to Parliament also?—It would injure a great many people to stop it, and it injures us to be going on.

9478. It would injure the mechanic who invented or made it, and the miner who wrought the iron out of the earth?—Yes.

9479. And other parties who are connected with these inventions?—Yes; and still while it is going on it is injuring us.

9480. Can you point out to us, as Legislators, any mode in which we can help you?—I have never given it much study; but I wish something could be done.

9481. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think that if the Ticket Act could be carried out it would do you any good?—It would do good in some instances, I think.

9482. Mr. *Gardner.*] But the Ticket Act is in existence now, is it not?—I do not think it is.

9483. It is in existence, but not in operation?—I do not think it is in operation.

William Bray, called in; and Examined.

William Bray.

9484. *Chairman.*] YOU live at Leicester?—At Sapcote.

9485. Is that near to Leicester?—Near to Hinckley.

9486. In Leicestershire?—In Leicestershire.

9487. What are you by business?—A framework-knitter.

9488. Who do you work to?—Mr. Turner, of Sharnford.

9489. A middleman?—A middleman.

9490. Mr. *Biggs.*] You are a journeymen, then?—No, I am not a journeyman; I do not work in his shop; he has not got a shop. I work to him; he is an agent to the manufacturer.

9491. *Chairman.*] Whose frame do you work upon?—I have four frames in my shop; two to Mr. Turner; those are 10*d.* Mr. Turner takes 10*d.* per frame from 12-gauges, including the 24-gauges, and above the 24-gauges, that is, twenty-sixes and thirties, 1*s.*, which, I believe, has always been the rule in the trade.

9492. He takes that for rent?—Yes, and 10*d.* in the pound for carriage.

9493. But for all above 24-gauge he takes 1*s.*?—Yes; he takes a halpenny in the shilling for his trouble in taking my work to Leicester. I live a mile distant from Sharnford.

9494. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That is, for what you call "taking in"?—Yes.

9495. *Chairman.*] But as to the frame rent charges, he takes 10*d.* under the 24-gauge, and 1*s.* above the 24-gauge?—Yes.

9496. So that it would not be right to say he takes 1*s.* frame rent in every case?—I have four frames; I have two of Mr. Turner's, one of another middleman's, and one of Mr. Baines's. I work two to Mr. Turner, and two to a man named Garrett. Garrett's frame is 10*d.*; that is his own; but there is one other to make up the four, that is Mr. Baines's, and I have to give 1*s.* for that; that is a warehouse frame.

9497. Sir *H. Halford.*] Are these four frames worked in your own family?—Yes.

9498. By your own children?—Yes.

9499. *Chairman.*] Are there many persons in the place you live at who work under Thomas Turner?—A great many.

9500. Do you know a person of the name of Thomas Harrison?—I do.

9501. Do you know what rent he pays; he pays 1*s.*, I understand?—He has a 26-gauge.

9502. Then William Flude?—Yes.

9503. He pays 1*s.* also?—Yes; but his is a warehouse frame; this is an 18-gauge; he takes the frame of Mr. Turner, but Mr. Turner takes it of one of the manufacturers.

9504. They are not Mr. Turner's own frames, then?—No.

9505. Then Michael Hincks?—He lives close to me.

9506. Is his a warehouse frame?—Yes, his is an 18-gauge.

9507. Henry Beale?—He works at a 24-gauge; but it is not Mr. Turner's frame; it is a warehouse frame.

9508. Do you know Charles Brown?—Yes.

9509. He pays 1*s.*?—Yes.

9510. What

9510. What kind of frame has he?—I think it is a 30 or a 28-gauge; I cannot say which.

9511. Then there is David Bray; is he a brother of yours?—No, he is a distant relation; he is something like a second cousin.

9512. He pays 1 *s.* also?—Yes, that is a warehouse frame.

9513. Then in all those cases where the parties have paid 1 *s.*, or above 10 *d.*, they have been working on frames above 20, or else on warehouse frames not belonging to Mr. Turner?—Yes, that is right.

9514. Then although these persons pay 1 *s.*, that is no contradiction to Mr. Turner's statement, that he only takes 10 *d.* for frames of his own under 24-gauge?—He does not; I have worked for Mr. Turner 16 years.

9515. Sir *H. Halford.*] Then in fact, if I understand you, Mr. Turner is content with less rent than that which is usually taken?—Yes, but there are of course exceptions to all rules; there is John Garrett, of Sapcote, who takes 10 *d.* for his frames, and Mr. Thomas Turner never took more than 10 *d.* for his frames. I am the oldest workman who works to Mr. Turner, out of Sapcote.

9516. The ordinary price being 1 *s.* for warehouse frames?—Yes; I have one now at 1 *s.*

9517. *Chairman.*] What are your earnings in a week on an average?—I have endeavoured to ascertain the truth, as near as I could; and it appears to me, upon considering the question, that on a 21-gauge man's hose at 4 *s.*, taking the average of the quick and industrious, and the slow hands, a man will not make more than two dozen of them in a week.

9518. You think that 8 *s.* a week is as much as he can earn?—On an average for good fair hands; not the best on the one hand, and not the worst on the other.

9519. Is that net, or before you take the charges off?—Before.

9520. Now tell us what are the charges upon these two dozen?—If you have a warehouse frame, it is of course 1 *s.*

9521. Take your own case: you pay 10 *d.*?—Yes, and still I pay 1 *s.*

9522. What is your gauge?—It is 24; that pays 1 *s.*; but it is a warehouse frame, that I have, through the medium of Garrett.

9523. What is the next charge?—The next charge is the seaming.

9524. What is the seaming?—The seaming would be 9 *d.* quite, because we always have to give above a penny, or they will not sew them up for us; not well, however.

9525. What else is there?—Then there is the carriage.

9526. Mr. *Cheetham.*] What you call "taking in"?—Yes; Mr. Turner takes but 10 *d.*, and Garrett takes 1 *s.*

9527. The carriage would be 4 *d.*?—Yes.

9528. What else is there?—You cannot work worsted like cotton; you cannot work it without a composition of soap and fat, and so on. We used to get this back, and a little to it too; but that is gone down in the trade now, and I should say 3 *d.*

9529. Is there anything else?—I do not recollect anything else.

9530. Are there not any needles; have you thought of them?—The steel needles have been the ruin of it; they do not break a quarter of a hundred in two months or three months.

9531. Then the whole is 1 *s.* 4 *d.* for charges, and 1 *s.* rent; that makes 2 *s.* 4 *d.*, which, deducted from 8 *s.*, leaves 5 *s.* 8 *d.*?—Yes.

9532. Mr. *Mundy.*] Is there nothing for standing?—I have no standing; it is all in my own family; but if you take standings, it is right to reckon that; that is 3 *d.* for every frame.

9533. Mr. *Gardner.*] What branch of the trade are you in?—The narrow wrought branch.

9534. Mr. *Cheetham.*] We have had evidence from Hinckley to the effect, that an able-bodied workman would turn out three dozen in a week, at 4 *s.*?—That they may; and it has been said, and I have heard manufacturers say, that a middleman, when he takes that work out, always wants three dozen; but there is his advantage; he gets a few frames of the manufacturer, and says he will have three dozen a week for those frames, or he cannot go on, and all the while he has a woman working to him, who he puts to his own frame. That is how a middleman works, and that is why they have so many frames of their own; and they pay well in consequence of that, because a woman does not do much work in the frame; if she is a tolerably good hand, especially with a steel needle, she does not do very much.

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9535. Sir *H. Halford.*] He runs in frames of his own for the sake of the rent?—Yes.

9536. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you know this of your own knowledge?—I do.

9537. Is it a common practice?—Yes, it is a common practice.

9538. Are you talking of Sapcote?—Of Sapcote.

9539. You know this of your own knowledge, do you?—Yes, I do; I know of one case in particular, and Mr. Turner heard the man relate the circumstance. You have the very name there; I heard it when I was there, not many weeks ago. The man said, "I was once lotted out a knot a week, in a very bad panic; at last the middleman came and said, 'Well, I think this is the last knot.' 'Why, is it?' I said; and he said, 'Yes.' I then went and sold the worsted, and went straight into the Union-house," and that is a fact.

9540. Does Mr. Turner practise this mode which you have been describing?—No; I have worked to him for 16 years, and never have had to sit still a day for want of work from him; but then again he is an exception, because none of the other middlemen do so; his back is pretty strong, and he will not mind laying out 20 *l.* to keep his hands at work.

9541. Do you know the other middlemen of Sapcote personally?—Yes; it has not been so bad lately.

9542. Mr. *Gardner.*] Why not?—The man who used to practise this so badly is dead and gone.

9543. Does Mr. Turner take full rent for half work?—He never gives out half work.

9544. Does he take full rent when the journeymen are sick?—He has done so in some cases.

9545. Is it a general rule?—I cannot speak to that; I know of one case in my own family in which it was done.

9546. Do you think he knew that the party was sick?—Yes; it was my daughter.

9547. Did you tell him of it?—No; I think it was mismanagement, in a manner, of the husband.

9548. Do you think Mr. Turner knew that the party was sick?—I do not know that.

9549. Has it happened to you to be sick?—Yes.

9550. What course has Mr. Turner pursued with regard to you when you have been sick?—I have been blessed with a great succession of health.

9551. But what course has Mr. Turner pursued with respect to yourself; you say you have been sick?—Yes; I believe he could not have taken the rent; if he did, I should have made some complaint, and I have no recollection of anything of the kind.

9552. Mr. *Biggs.*] Mr. Turner is a fair man, is he not?—Yes, he is a straightforward man.

9553. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you of opinion that middlemen are necessary for the purpose of carrying on the trade?—Yes; they are beneficial to the manufacturer.

9554. What is your opinion as to the effect upon the workmen of the system of middlemen?—But for the middlemen, every manufacturer must almost have another clerk.

9555. Do you think it is necessary, for a manufacturer's security, that he should have somebody who is responsible for the material he sends out?—I do not know. I heard a gentleman of Leicester say (Mr. Hudson), that he had lost eight hundredweight of worsted by the middlemen in two years; I waited on the manufacturers in a deputation, and Mr. Hudson said, in my hearing, that he had lost eight hundredweight of worsted by the middlemen.

9556. But it has been said that the middleman is more responsible than the knitter, and that it is a security to the manufacturer to have a man of that kind?—I am sorry to say, there are some who are low enough.

9557. Mr. *Biggs.*] You have reason to suppose that, in point of fact, you do get the warehouse price, have you not?—Yes; I should know it if I did not.

9558. How should you know it?—I happened to name it to a gentleman that I worked this frame to.

9559. Mr. *Gardner.*] Are you in favour of legislative interference with the present system or not?—It is a question I have thought much of, and I am free to confess that it is a most difficult point to come to a decision upon, in my own mind;

mind; I think that we are in so degraded a state, that it would be desirable if our condition could be improved in any shape or form; I do think it might help us in one way, if it hurt us in another.

9560. Describe the one way in which you think it might help you?—If a man has an allotment of 700 or 800 of ground, it is folly to say he can attend to that in a few hours; he must spend a good deal of time over it, and if there was poundage taken, the workman would not be paying for his machine when he was at work at other things.

9561. Mr. *Biggs.*] If the middleman were not paid in his present mode, how would you propose he should be paid for his services?—I think there might be an arrangement between the workman and the middleman, for the middleman to have so much. I cannot expect any manufacturer or middleman to find me a frame for no rent at all; no man can suppose that, if he uses his common senses. For instance, would you, or would I, if I were a man of property, invest my property in machinery, and receive nothing for it? It is a contradiction to common sense to suppose such a thing.

9562. Mr. *Gardner.*] You said, that under the poundage system, a man would not have to be paying rent for his frame while he was working in his allotment?—No.

9563. Do you think it is fair to the owner of a frame, while a man is pursuing his business or pleasure elsewhere, that he should have his machine standing still, and not pay anything for it?—And is it right, on the other hand, for the manufacturer to receive rent for his frame when it is not being worn out?

9564. That depends, of course, entirely upon the bargain or understanding under which the workman takes the frame, I apprehend?—No, not altogether, I think; I think the meaning of the thing is, in justice, this: that if I am working the frame, I ought to pay some rent for it; a system of poundage would settle the question.

9565. But the frames would be lying idle while you were amusing yourself on your allotment?—In that case, the stocking-maker should not be paying rent for that which he is not wearing out.

9566. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You receive 4 *s.* a dozen at present for the hose you make, and you make two dozen a week?—Yes.

9567. You are then, in point of fact, paying 6 *d.* per dozen rent, as you make two dozen hose?—Yes.

9568. Sixpence a dozen is charged by way of rent?—Yes.

9569. So that your net earning is 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen?—Yes.

9570. Is it your opinion, that a system of paying 3 *s.* 6 *d.* a dozen net, taking your own case, could be carried out voluntarily between you and your employer?—Yes, it is my firm opinion that it could.

9571. And if it were so carried out, would it, in your opinion, be more satisfactory to the men?—Yes, because it would be the greatest inducement to keep the prices up.

9572. The prices of what?—The prices of the workmen, for the manufacturer himself would sooner give 5 *s.* for a dozen hose than 4 *s.*, because it would take five fours to make 1 *l.*; he must have five dozen to get 1 *l.* at 4 *s.* a dozen; if the price was raised a shilling, it would only take four dozen to make 1 *l.*; and the manufacturer would wish to raise the price, so that he might have a better feeling out of the work.

9573. How would the manufacturer be able to raise the price of his goods to his customers?—It would be an inducement to him to do so.

9574. Has he nothing to do but to ask his customers to pay him the advanced price?—When the price of material rises there is no question about it; they know they must pay more for their goods then; and I do believe that, at the present moment, if the manufacturers would but come out like gentlemen, as they know what state we are in, and give a shilling a dozen advance, there would not be a word said.

9575. You think that would stop the agitation?—I do.

9576. Has your attention ever been drawn, you living in Leicestershire, to the new machinery that has been introduced there?—Never.

9577. You have not inquired into it?—No.

9578. You do not know, then, whether the introduction of that new and improved machinery has had any influence upon your position?—Yes, I believe it has been detrimental to us.

9579. You think you are either suffering now, or that you will suffer, from its operation?—I believe we are suffering now, and that we have still to suffer.

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9580. Would the abolition of these frame-rents prevent your suffering from your competition with the improved machinery?—I do not know; it is a battle to be fought. I heard it said, and I thought of that at the time, that they might as well say the knitting-pins were to be introduced again. I can remember the time when my mother used to spin with a two-handed wheel, and then they got to jennies, and then got to these thingumbobs that make them all at once.

9581. Do you think that the opinion of the workmen you are working with would be in favour of stopping these new inventions?—Yes, I am sure of it.

Jovis, 5° die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Ingham.	Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Biggs.	Lord John Manners.
Sir Henry Halford.	Mr. Gardner.
Mr. Mundy.	

ROBERT INGHAM, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *William Mason,* called in; and Examined.

Mr. W. Mason.

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9582. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you live?—At Nottingham.

9583. Are you connected with the hosiery trade?—I am not now. It is some four years since I was connected with the trade.

9584. You are a Scripture Reader?—Yes.

9585. Have you filled that office in Nottingham all the time?—No; I was employed some years in business on my own account previous to coming to Nottingham.

9586. What kind of business were you employed in?—Making india rubber stockings and goods of that kind for medical gentlemen.

9587. Have you at any period of your life been engaged in the hosiery trade?—At short intervals. I served an apprenticeship to it.

9588. How long have you been a Scripture reader there?—Nearly two years.

9589. Mr. *Mundy.*] Previous to that you were in the hosiery trade in Derby, were you not?—Yes.

9590. Were you always resident in Derby or the neighbourhood?—In the neighbourhood; I served my apprenticeship in Duffield, near Derby.

9591. Under what system did you work?—Under the rent and charges system.

9592. Have you ever been under the other system?—I have not.

9593. You were always under the rent and charges system?—Always.

9594. What is your opinion as to the operation of that system as far as it affects the workmen?—As the matter now stands, I cannot say that I could give a practical opinion with regard to it; there have been a great many alterations since I was in it.

9595. But at that time how did it operate?—At that time it did not operate so prejudicially as it does now, for many reasons; the trade was much better, and the frames then in existence were more generally employed than they are now.

9596. At the present time, you do think the system operates prejudicially?—In some cases, decidedly.

9597. *Chairman.*] Will you have the goodness to explain how?—As I just now remarked, I am not at all able to give a practical opinion as to the working of the system at the present time, and how it happens that I have been requested to attend here, I cannot say; for, as I have already said, it is nearly four years since I have had anything to do with the trade, and there have been many changes within that time.

9598. Mr. *Mundy.*] You said just now that you thought the system acted prejudicially at the present time?—I do think so, according to what I hear, but I cannot speak from my own practical experience.

9599. You are living among the framework-knitting population at Nottingham, are you not?—Yes.

9600. And you have, I suppose, a good deal of intercourse with them?—A great deal in the course of my daily occupation as a town missionary.

9601. In what condition do you find them now?—Their condition is very bad, and it is getting worse; but that arises generally from want of employment. They are, I should say, not more than half employed; but in many cases, notwithstanding they are only half employed, the charges are the same.

9602. The full rent is taken?—Yes; the full rent is taken.

9603. And the other charges?—And the other charges; but whilst I say that, I wish it to be understood that I do not attribute it to the manufacturers; those exorbitant charges lie principally with the middlemen, as they are termed; that is, persons who receive the work from the manufacturers and distribute it to their workmen. Some of those persons are more considerate than others, but some are grievously hard upon the workmen.

9604. What is the practice with regard to charges in cases where workmen are ill?—It was only the day before yesterday that, in the course of my visitation, I called upon a man; I found him ill in bed; he lives in Darker's-court, Broad Marsh. I was requested by his daughter to go up stairs to visit him, and finding him in bed, I noticed a frame in the corner of the apartment in which he was lying, and I asked him whether in case of sickness he would have to pay rent for that frame; he told me that he had had to pay rent for it during his sickness, and I found upon inquiry that the frame cost originally 1*l.*; it had been bought at an auction. The man had worked it between 10 and 11 years, paying 9*d.* a week rent. I cast it up, and said, "Why, you have paid something like 20*l.* for the use of this frame, and the probability is, that you may pay some 10*l.* more if you should continue to be able to work it, and it remains in your hands." I examined the frame and the condition it was in; the man grievously complained of this, and I certainly thought it was very hard, after he had worked a frame so long for the same person, that he should have been charged rent for it during the time of his sickness; but so it was.

9605. How long had he been ill?—He had been confined to his bed almost a fortnight.

9606. Did he work direct to a warehouse?—The person employing him does not keep a warehouse; he keeps a shop.

9607. Is he a middleman?—No.

9608. He keeps a small shop, I suppose?—No; it is a considerable shop.

9609. Are there frames working in the shop?—No; it is a shop where the man sells his goods; haberdashery and hosiery.

9610. But the frames are in the workmen's own houses?—Yes; the frames which the man I speak of holds. He did hold eight at one time; they were all under his own care, at his own house.

9611. Had you ever known this person before in illness?—I had visited him, but not in illness; it is usual to visit a district for a considerable length of time; we are considered to visit in one district something like two years, consequently I call upon the individuals in that district repeatedly.

9612. And in these visits have you ever met with any similar instances?—I have.

9613. Instances of rent being taken in cases of sickness?—Yes.

9614. Do you happen to know whether they were taken immediately by the manufacturers, or through the intervention of a middleman?—In every case which has come under my observation, they have been taken through the intervention of a middleman.

9615. Are we to understand that from those cases which have come under your observation you believe it to be the usual practice of middlemen to take rent in these cases?—As a rule; there are no doubt exceptions, but as a rule they take the rent.

9616. Both in cases of sickness and in cases of partial work?—Yes.

9617. But that does not apply to the manufacturers themselves?—Not at all. I have worked myself to warehouses. I worked to Mr. Morley, of Nottingham, something like 13 years to the warehouse, and I never knew him take rent in case of sickness from any of his hands; but I have known him repeatedly contribute very handsomely to their support in cases of sickness.

9618. *Chairman.*] Is that Mr. Arthur Morley?—His father. I worked with him when his father was in business, more particularly. He was but a young gentleman at the time I left their employ.

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9619. Mr. *Mundy.*] What is the feeling among the framework-knitters generally with regard to the rent and charges system; would they rather have it continued, do you think, or do they desire an alteration?—Generally, they are anxious for an alteration

9620. With the idea that they would be benefited thereby?—Yes.

9621. In what way do you think they anticipate they will be benefited?—The general part of them consider that if they were to receive so much per dozen for making hose or gloves, without any deductions for machinery, it would be a benefit to them; none of them conceive that the manufacturers should made a considerable outlay of capital in machinery without receiving any return for it; but I will suppose a case: I make three dozen of gloves per week; that three dozen, in some cases, we will suppose to come to 4*s.*; I have 1*s.* 9*d.* deducted for charges; now by the other rule I should have but 9*d.* deducted; I should be considered to pay half a week's charges, according to the use I made of the machinery. But upon this rule it is quite notorious that the work is spread over a greater number of frames, and by that means they obtain charges for less than what is considered half a week's work in many cases.

9622. That is the case at the present time, is it?—You will please to understand that, when I am saying this, I am not saying it from my own practical observation, but from what I hear among the men whom I visit. I called on one man yesterday, who is one of the principal glove frame-holders in Nottingham, I believe. He showed me his bills, and told me that he makes no charge to the men direct, but that they receive so much per dozen less, in consideration that they pay no charges.

9623. How do the workmen like that plan?—The men generally prefer it; in one case there was an objection raised.

9624. How much per dozen do they take?—Threepence per dozen, and in some cases 4½*d.*; it depends upon the quality and price of the gloves; but, as a rule, it would be 3*d.* Suppose it is habits or common women's gloves, they would receive 3*d.* per dozen; if they were what we call outsides, they would be 4½*d.* per dozen.

9625. And that you think is a preferable system, do you?—I should prefer it myself, because if I made only one dozen of gloves, I should, in that case, only pay threepence charges; I should receive the remainder.

9626. Is the 1*s.* 9*d.* you spoke of just now entirely for charges, or does it include rent?—That is what we term rent and charges.

9627. Lord *J. Manners.*] A shilling rent, and ninepence charges; is that it?—Yes.

9628. Mr. *Biggs.*] I thought you said it was 9*d.* rent?—It depends on what kind of frame it is; that to which I referred was a two-needle frame; they pay but 9*d.*, whereas for what we call a silk frame, or a three-needle frame, they pay 1*s.*

9629. Sir *H. Halford.*] I think you have said that the value of the frame of which you have spoken was about 1*l.*?—It cost 1*l.* at an auction.

9630. Do you know whether it was in a workable condition, without anything being done to it?—The man told me that it was in a very bad condition when it came into his hands, but it had not cost the owner anything; he had done that which many other stockingers do, put it into good working condition himself.

9631. With his own hands?—With his own hands.

9632. And the cost of it having been 1*l.*, ninepence a week was charged all the year round?—Yes.

9633. How much does ninepence a week come to in the course of the year?—About 39 shillings.

9634. So that if it has been said that in some instances as much as 200*l.* per cent. was charged for a frame, it would not be a great exaggeration in that case?—I have known more than 200*l.* per cent. paid for a frame.

9635. Mr. *Biggs.*] But that has been an exceptional case, has it not?—Yes. Some years ago the glove branch was very different from what it is now; the frames that were used in making gloves were not calculated to make silk stockings; those frames must either go to the shop to be what we call recruited or thoroughly repaired, entailing a considerable outlay upon the owner, or otherwise they would be used for making gloves, and turning them to the making of gloves, they would go for a considerable time, and if a frame was one of this description, we will say an old model carcase, a person could get little more than the value of old

id iron for it; but if I want a frame, and I see one of this sort which is rusty, nd which is thrown on one side as old iron, I purchase it, and straighten it up, nd set it to work; and that frame might go some six or seven years, making loves and paying the same rent as a frame in good repair. Those are the kind f instances in which I have known these charges to be made on a frame not orth more than 1*l.*; it would pay a shilling a week rent for some five or six ears.

9636. Sir *H. Halford.*] Suppose a workman were to get possession of a frame f that sort himself, what would be his position then?—Supposing a workman to et possession of a frame of that description, unless he could get employment for t, it would be in a measure useless.

9637. Do you think he would have any chance of getting employment?—Not t the present time.

9638. *Chairman.*] Trade is very slack just now, is it not?—Very slack.

9639. How long has that depression continued?—It has been declining for a umber of years now.

9640. Mr. *Mundy.*] When do you consider that it was last in a prosperous condition?—Some 12 years ago it was tolerably good. I was getting more money hen than ever I did in the hosiery business, but it fell off soon after that considerably, and I think it has gone on declining down to the present time.

9641. Do you mean to say that it has been gradually declining ever since, or hat there have been fluctuations?—There have been some fluctuations, but here has never been anything like what we might consider any permanent good rade.

9642. And to what, principally, do you attribute this continual depression?—As respects the silk branch, I attribute it in a great measure to the present fashion. There are very few of what we call quality stockings made now; they are more spurious goods; in fact, there are very few indeed what we consider quality stockings made; I do not know one man who is making them for Mr. Brettel's firm, of Belper; they are a considerable firm. There is a man who worked with me some time ago at Derby who was making their finer kind of goods, but he has been out of work for a considerable length of time; they considered him the very best workman they had.

9643. Does he retain his frame, then?—He did the last time I heard of him, which was a few months back.

9644. Was he paying rent at that time?—No, he had not any work whatever to it.

9645. Then it is not Mr. Brettel's habit to take rent under those circumstances?—I believe not. I am not aware that any of the manufacturers do; in some cases, probably, they may charge at a rent which the men sometimes complain of; but these exorbitant charges rest principally with the middlemen.

9646. Are these middlemen owners of frames generally, or do they rent what are called independent frames?—The greater part of them have frames of their own, as well as those which they rent of the manufacturers who employ them.

9647. Are there now many independent frames in Nottingham?—I cannot speak to that with any degree of certainty; I am not so much acquainted with Nottingham as I was with Derby.

9648. But at that time, at Derby, were there many independent frames?—A good number.

9649. And at Duffield too?—And at Duffield too.

9650. Belonging to different people?—To different people.

9651. To smiths, and people unconnected with the trade altogether?—Altogether unconnected with the trade; it was at one time considered to be a very good investment of capital.

9652. How do you think it operated with regard to the workmen engaged in the trade?—Prejudicially.

9653. Why do you think so?—Because it brought a greater number of frames into operation than were needed, consequently the independent frames had to compete with those belonging to the manufacturers, and it would operate prejudicially in this way: supposing me to be a middleman, I hold 20 frames, 10 of them belong, say to my employer, and 10 are my own; there comes a slackness in the trade; I wish to retain the whole of my workmen, and in many cases I may offer to work these frames to a manufacturer, allowing him rent for them, for the purpose of gaining employment. This has been practised many times.

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9654. You mean to say that, practically, it has happened that rent has been paid for a frame where it did not belong to the manufacturer?—Yes; and then, this being the case, it has a tendency to bring down the price. If a manufacturer objects to let me have work on this condition, I probably then, as an inducement, offer to take the work at so much per dozen less; and I do this with a view of getting my frame rent from the persons who occupy them. This has been the case, and this has been the means of bringing down the prices.

9655. Mr. *Biggs.*] You say you were formerly engaged as a framework-knitter; how long is that since?—I was apprenticed in 1817.

9656. When did you leave the trade?—Nearly four years ago.

9657. I understand you to say that your present opinion is not derived from personal observation as to workmen, but from what you have heard others say?—Yes; the latter evidence I have given as to the operation of the frames, I have given from my own personal knowledge.

9658. You say that the condition of the working classes in Nottingham now is bad?—It is bad.

9659. And you ascribe that as regards the silk branch to a change of fashion?—Yes.

9660. Creating a want of employment?—Yes.

9661. To what do you ascribe the depression in the cotton branch?—A similar cause; want of employment and change of fashion as well.

9662. You say that the men are not satisfied with the existing system as far as you hear, and that they would prefer that a change should be made to a net system?—Yes.

9663. Do you know at all what the men expect as the result of that change; do they expect that they would get the same wages as they now get without these charges; or what do you imagine they expect?—They expect that they would get more wages; they expect that there would be a reduction upon the articles made, but at the same time they expect that they would realise better wages.

9664. Then, in fact, they expect that an Act of Parliament will raise their wages?—Yes.

9665. In the case you cited a little while ago, of sickness; there the man had been ill a fortnight, had he not?—Yes.

9666. And I understand that he had not been charged, but expected to be charged upon going in; was that so?—He had been charged.

9667. Had he been in to the warehouse, or had he sent his work in?—I cannot speak to that.

9668. How could he do any work if he was ill?—He had not done any work, but still he had been charged for the frame, he having been ill.

9669. Do you know the particulars of that case, because to me it seems to be very improbable. I do not see how a man could be charged anything who was ill in bed?—But that is not a solitary case. There are hundreds of those cases to be found.

9670. Had he sent in his work, or how had he been charged?—I cannot speak to that, not having made inquiry; but I dare vouch that if you had a hundred stocking-makers here, they could give you a hundred instances, if they were men of general observation, in which they have known men to be charged frame-rent when they have been ill, and really have not been capable of working a frame.

9671. You say that that is not done by the manufacturers, but by the middlemen?—Yes.

9672. But in this particular instance, which seems to me, I must say, to be a very unsatisfactory instance, the man does not appear to have gone in and to have been charged anything?—He had gone in.

9673. Before he became ill?—You must understand me; this was a previous illness which we have been speaking of.

9674. When you were in the trade, were you ever charged full rent in case of sickness by either middleman or manufacturer?—I never was sick so as to be laid aside from work.

9675. Were you ever half employed?—Many times.

9676. In that case, how were you charged as respects the rent; were you charged the whole rent, or what?—In some cases, by some masters with whom I had work, I was charged the full rent, and in other cases only part; generally, I had a consideration made in consequence of not having full work.

9677. As

9677. As far as your own personal experience goes, the practice of charging full rent for half work, or in cases of sickness, was not always adopted?—Not always.

9678. Not invariably?—Not invariably. I had to complain much sometimes of what I considered was an exorbitant charge.

9679. Had you to do that in your own case?—In many cases.

9680. The workmen are not employed the whole year round at Nottingham, are they?—No.

9681. There has been great want of employment, has there not, for many years?—Yes.

9682. Is not that enough in itself to account for the existing distress and depression?—Undoubtedly; but when the men are but partially employed, this charge, in many cases, adds to that distress very materially.

9683. Is it not a matter of compact between the middleman and the workman himself, and would not a workman, do you think, rather be partially employed under the existing system than have no employment at all?—Yes.

9684. Suppose the present system were to be done away with, do you think that the condition of the workmen would be raised if there were no increased demand for the goods manufactured?—Not at all.

9685. And a change of system by Act of Parliament could not increase that demand?—Not at all.

9686. Mr. *Mundy.*] But the workmen would get employment in other trades, I suppose?—I believe that the stocking-makers generally make great efforts to get into other trades.

9687. Lord *J. Manners.*] The allotment or garden system prevails very extensively, does it not, in the town of Nottingham?—Yes.

9688. Workmen have generally gardens, have they not?—Great numbers of them have.

9689. Is it your opinion that, if they had not those gardens, they could continue working at the present rate of wages, and with the present employment?—There are a very few stocking-makers compared with other persons in the town holding gardens; such is the uncertainty of their employment, and such is the very small amount of wages they obtain, that in many cases they dare not enter upon any agreements of that kind.

9690. You think that their means are insufficient to enable them to hire these small gardens?—Yes.

9691. But the other working people in Nottingham derive considerable benefit, do they not, from the holding of those gardens?—In some cases they may do so; but in other cases I believe it is no material benefit to them, for they pay a very high rent indeed for some of their land.

9692. Can you tell us what the rent is?—Something like a penny per yard; but there are a great number of gardens held under the corporation in a part called the Coppice. The persons occupying those gardens pay a halfpenny and in some cases three farthings per yard; a person has offered me for sale a garden which he holds there, and for which he is now paying a halfpenny a yard.

9693. Sir *H. Halford.*] You say that the stockingers make great efforts to get out of the business?—Great efforts.

9694. Are their efforts to obtain other employment commonly successful?—In many instances they obtain other employment; but in the generality of cases they fail. I can speak with respect to myself. I know that I made an effort for years to do so, and in some cases I succeeded for a time; and then I had to return to the same thing again.

9695. What cause do you think it is that impedes their efforts to escape from a very bad trade to a better?—Such has been their sedentary employment, and such has been their want of general practical knowledge in other laborious kinds of work, that they cannot succeed in general in these undertakings; if they can get into situations of light labour or trust, they are generally successful; a great many in Derby have gone into the police force there.

9696. Do you think there is anything that causes more children to be brought up to the stocking-making business than are wanted for it?—I attribute the great number of children that are now brought up to the stocking-making branch to arise from this cause; it is more prevalent in the rural districts than it is in the towns; in the rural districts there are great numbers, but these are principally in the two-needle branch or the cotton branch; they are put to work in a frame,

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and it is not unusual to see them with their treddles bolstered up, and their seat-boards raised, to enable them to reach the frame by these artificial means, and so foot the stockings and work in that kind of way until they become capable to work the frame; and in these cases they are put to work to eke out the parents' wages in the absence of better employment.

9697. It is a description of work that can be executed by children, more or less?—In the cotton branch; in the silk branch it is otherwise. I have not known a boy put apprentice to the silk branch within the last 14 or 15 years to my own knowledge.

9698. You consider, then, that the parents, in order to eke out their own earnings, are under the necessity of committing their children to this trade?—They do so generally; I have remonstrated with several parents upon this very subject. I have said to them, "Now, what prospect can you have in putting your children to this trade; can you get your living at it?" I have said, "I have several sons, and I would sooner make them sweeps than stockingers, because they would have a better opportunity of gaining a livelihood." I have made great efforts myself to keep my children out of the trade, and I have succeeded. I have known, I may say many times at our house, what it has been to provide a dinner for nine in family with a penny.

9699. So that there being a number of children always brought up to the trade, it is not likely that the over-supply of labour will abate so long as the present system continues?—In the two-needle branch this applies; but you will find very few men indeed who work in the silk hose branch who could see to work without spectacles; and in a very few years the good workmen in the silk hose branch will most decidedly be run out. I feel persuaded that in the present state of things, they could not get a workman to make a good-quality stocking in Derby now; and they could not find three men to make a good-quality stocking in the silk.

9700. Do you ascribe that to their failure of sight?—It is in consequence of so very few hands having been put into the trade.

9701. That applies to the silk branch, does it not, and not to the cotton?—Yes.

9702. Nor to the worsted; you know nothing of the worsted, I suppose?—Very little. I know most of the silk branch, having served my apprenticeship to silk hose making; and when they fell off, I then went into silk glove making, and that fell off also. I found a few friends to advance me a little money, and then went into the making of india-rubber goods; and not being so successful in that as I could desire from the want of more capital, I was engaged some two years back as a town missionary for Nottingham.

9703. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that your experience has been confined entirely to the silk department?—Entirely.

9704. And is not that, as compared with the cotton, a very small portion of the hosiery business?—It is.

9705. So that your observations, in fact, have no reference to the cotton branch?—No.

9706. When you state that the trade of Nottingham has been in a depressed state during the last 12 years; you confine that observation to the silk trade, do you not?—It would apply to both silk and cotton.

9707. Where do you reside?—At Stratton-street, Nottingham.

9708. Are you not aware that three years ago the trade of Nottingham never was in a more healthy or active state as regards the cotton branch?—I believe you are correct; but if you speak of the present time, it is far otherwise.

9709. But I understood you to say, in reply to a question put to you by an honourable Member of the Committee, that for 12 years past the trade had been in a continued state of depression?—That would apply to the silk branch.

9710. You have been speaking as to the bringing up of children to the trade; that refers to the villages, I suppose?—It would refer more particularly to the villages.

9711. Is it not the fact, that there are very few frames indeed in the town of Nottingham?—There are a great many.

9712. In the town?—In the town.

9713. But the larger proportion of the workmen reside in the villages around, do they not?—I am not prepared to say whether the larger proportion do: I should hardly think it is so; I should think that the larger proportion are in the town.

9714. With

9714. With regard to the workmen in the town, do they bring their children up to their own trade?—Not as a rule.

9715. But in the country you think they do?—Yes.

9716. Is not that caused by two considerations: first, that in the villages there are no other means of employment for children?—No, there are no other means.

9717. And secondly, because the stocking trade affords them employment as a domestic manufacture?—Yes.

9718. Is it your impression that the condition of the workmen would be improved by the abolition of that domestic manufacture, and its removal to large factories?—I cannot say it would. There is a very great diversity of opinions upon that very subject.

9719. Then if evidence has been tendered to the Committee, to the effect that the operation of legislating in reference to frame rents and charges, would be to destroy that domestic manufacture in the villages, you would regret it if such a result should be produced?—I am not possessed of sufficient knowledge on the subject to give an opinion.

9720. Can you tell the Committee whether the condition of the framework-knitters in the villages is superior to the condition of those living in the town of Nottingham?—I believe it is superior in the villages.

9721. From what cause do you think that arises?—It arises simply in this way; in a town a man has to pay more house-rent than a man has to pay who lives in a village; and the man in the town, if he has no work, has no means of obtaining anything; whereas in a village, if he be a thoughtful man, he has the means of renting a little bit of ground at a reasonable rate for the growing of potatoes; in many cases they keep pigs, and in this way they fare better generally. What I am now stating is the general opinion of all the working men with whom I have conversed upon the subject. I think that in the villages they fare better, upon the whole, than they do in the towns, and that arises principally from the two causes to which I have referred; a workman in the town, if he has no work in his frame, has nothing which he can turn his attention to, to get anything, but his rent is going on all the time; so that when he gets to work again, if he is in arrear for rent, it takes him more time to clear himself, and what he has to pay is a great drawback on his earnings.

9722. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think it is a necessary condition of the domestic manufacture in the villages that frames should only be obtainable at an exorbitant rent?—I do not think it is a necessary condition.

9723. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you not think, from your knowledge of the trade, that the existence of this rent system has a tendency to keep the workmen more continuously employed than would be the case but for such a system?—I believe not.

9724. If frame rents were abolished, do you think that a workman would be so continuously employed as he is now?—I believe he would.

9725. Explain how and why, if you please?—The additional frames which come in competition with those that are actually necessary to make the quantity of work required, have a tendency, as I before observed, to bring down the price by inducements being offered to manufacturers to employ them; and I have no doubt that some of the manufacturers would admit that such offers are frequently made to them; they have admitted to me repeatedly that offers such as I allude to have frequently been made to them. By these means the work is made up quicker, and the demand, whatever it may be, is sooner supplied, while the employment in many cases keeps men at a starvation rate as regards their wages. For my own part, my advice to every young man in connexion with the trade is, to get out of it at whatever sacrifice, for there is no prospect for him. I do not think for a moment that any law that Parliament could pass would really and permanently better the condition of the working men; that is my fixed opinion, and it has been so for years.

9726. Upon what ground have you formed that opinion?—Such is the alteration in the fashions, and such is the amount of spurious goods now made, that I believe the trade is so far gone down that it cannot be revived so as to enable men to get a comfortable livelihood. There are dozens and dozens of stockings made at the present time at Nottingham at 1 *d.* and 1½ *d.* a dozen; and those come into the market; and the present fashions allow both ladies and gentlemen too to wear goods which they otherwise would not wear.

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9727. Are those hose to which you refer as being made at 1 *d.* and 1 ½ *d.* a dozen made upon the new machinery?—Yes.

9728. At what rate must a workman be paid if he made a similar class of goods upon the narrow machinery?—I am so little acquainted with the two-needle work that I could give but very imperfect answers to any questions which might be put to me upon that point.

9729. So far as you do know of it, should you say that a man could exist at all, receiving only 1 *d.* and 1 ½ *d.* a dozen for that description of hose, if produced on the narrow frame?—Decidedly not.

9730. So that his labour, when brought into competition with the new and improved machinery, if he received nothing for it, would still not induce the manufacturer to retain him?—In some cases, I believe, some of the manufacturers would not make those goods; but when I say this, I am speaking not from what I have heard from the manufacturers themselves directly, but from those to whom the manufacturers have named it; but, if they receive an extensive order, and in executing that order these goods may be required, they of course purchase them.

9731. Take the case of a workman working on his narrow frame, and take the case of a manufacturer with an improved frame upon which he is paying 1 *d.* and 1 ½ *d.* a dozen; can the workman upon the narrow frame for a moment compete with the improved machinery by any reduction of wages whatever?—He cannot, as to the amount produced; if you speak of the quality of the article, then it is different.

9732. Will a manufacturer, if he can get the goods he requires produced at 1 *d.* or 1 ½ *d.* a dozen upon the new machinery, give the workmen upon the narrow machines more than that?—He does in many cases; he is compelled to do so, because upon the kind of machinery to which you refer they cannot make anything but spurious goods.

9733. I am confining my question to a comparison between the same class of goods?—They cannot be made.

9734. Then of course a workman working in a narrow frame is unable to come in competition in any way with the improved machinery, with reference to that class of goods?—I wish to say, that upon the improved machinery of which you are speaking, they cannot make that class of goods which we consider good wrought stockings; that is upon that kind of machinery for the work produced, on which the workmen receive 1 *d.* and 1 ½ *d.* a dozen.

9735. *Chairman.*] Upon these spurious goods, would it be possible at any rate of wages for a working man to compete with the produce of the loom?—I could only answer that question in the way I have answered it before; that with reference to the number of dozens produced, they could not compete with the new machinery.

9736. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You call those goods spurious which are produced by the improved machinery, and those produced in the other way you consider to be the proper kind to be made, but the consumer decides that question; these goods that you call spurious are very largely consumed, are they not?—They are.

9737. What I ask you is this: can a workman who clings to the old frame compete with the new machinery, with reference to that quality of goods?—He cannot.

9738. Mr. *Biggs.*] I asked you about frame rents, and whether, in your opinion, they did not secure continuous employment, but you did not answer the question exactly; let me put it to you in another way; you know what independent frames are, do you not?—Yes.

9739. Are they not always turned off first in flat times?—Generally speaking, they are.

9740. The hosiers or manufacturers' frames are continued in employment while the others are turned off, are they not?—Generally that is the case.

9741. Does not that show that the rent system establishes a continuous link of employment, which does not exist in the case of independent frames?—Yes; but suppose you change that rent, and put it in another shape. I am working, I will suppose to you, as a manufacturer; I will say, you give me 1 *s.* a dozen for gloves: but instead of giving me 1 *s.* a dozen, you will give me 9 *d.*, in consideration that I pay you no frame rent; that is what the men generally wish, but now it often happens that a great part of what is earned is consumed in the shape of frame rent. I have worked myself all the week, and have been in debt at the week's

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end for charges, and have had to work the next week towards paying my last week's charges.

9742. *Chairman.*] Under what circumstances were you in that strait?—I will show you. I have a new frame, I will say, put into my hands; it may come as perfect out of the hands of the framesmith as it is possible to be made; but let it be as perfect as it may, it is always considered a long tedious job to get it to work; I am now speaking of a frame to make fine silk stockings; the frame when I first have it is rough, and it does not work correctly in every point; a frame to make those kind of goods must be very correct in every respect, otherwise my employer discovers, with his practical eye, what we term lines and faults, and complains of the work; and if those complaints are continued, he would discharge me, or I might have to submit to an abatement. Consequently, I must set this frame to work; it is always considered a very good week's work with a stockinger, if very successful, and working 15 or 16 hours a week, to get that frame to work; but if he has some out-of-the-way difficulties to contend with, it may take him two or three weeks, and yet he would have to pay rent for his frame under those circumstances. I have worked a frame, in some cases, 14 and 15 hours a day, and have been under charges at the end of the week for that frame, and have had to work the next week to defray those charges; it is an invariable rule for a stocking-maker to put his frame to work, and it is a matter of considerable time in many cases. I once had a frame which, I should say, cost me 5 *l.* before I got it to work; the master made me some allowance, but still I consider that at that time I lost 5 *l.*; work was good and plentiful, and I could have got good wages at that time.

9743. *Chairman.*] You were 34 years in the business, were you not?—Yes.

9744. During that time, how many new frames had you to get into good working order?—I never had but one bran-new frame, but I have had many what we call recruits; those would be called new frames by some, but I never had but one thoroughly new frame.

9745. Do the recruits require the same management to get them into working order as the new frames?—They often take longer time.

9746. How frequently did it occur to you to have this tedious week's work to go through?—I had some six or seven of those frames during that time.

9747. Those are the occasions, are they not, when the charges exceeded the gains of the week?—Yes; but there are many other cases in which the charges exceeded the gains of the week. I have frequently been brought into debt over and above that for charges when I have been short of work, but never through sickness; I never was off a day's work in my life through sickness.

9748. Lord *J. Manners.*] Owing to full charges being taken when you had only partial work, you found yourself, at the end of the week, out of pocket?—Yes.

9749. Mr. *Mundy.*] Has that frequently occurred?—Many times.

9750. Mr. *Gardner.*] How many times do you think it has occurred in the course of your experience?—I cannot say how many times it has occurred.

9751. Mr. *Biggs.*] Was it the rule, or the exception?—I believe it was the exception, for the masters I worked with generally were considerate men; but there were some who, if they had pressed upon me as they did upon some other men, I should have left their employ.

9752. Lord *J. Manners.*] I understand you to have said, that you have been in communication recently with the workpeople in an establishment in which the net system has been introduced?—Yes.

9753. And you also expressed an opinion favourable to the net system?—Yes.

9754. Do you ground that preference partially on what you heard in that establishment, and on what the men said?—If I was going to work to-morrow in a frame, I should prefer being paid so much per dozen, whether for stockings or gloves, on the quantity I made, to the present system of charges, for two reasons; such is the uncertainty of employment now, that I should gain more wages by it; if, however, I was fully employed, I would prefer the original charge, because I should do more work than would cover that; but there are two reasons why it would be more desirable to the workmen: one is, that the great majority of the workmen in the trade now are in middle life; very few of them can work without spectacles, and consequently a man, when he comes to that, is not so quick; and

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the other reason is, the uncertainty of employment. I consider that a man now is not fully employed above seven months in the year.

9755. You are speaking now of the silk branch, are you not?—Yes.

9756. Was the establishment to which you have referred a silk establishment?—Yes; silk gloves.

9757. There you found the workmen contented?—Yes; he employs 20 workmen.

9758. Mr. *Cheetham.*] You say that in the case of full employment, the deduction which is made for frame rent is not felt as a grievance?—In case of full employment it is not.

9759. But the grievance arises when partial employment only is given out, and the full deduction made?—In cases of partial employment and sickness.

9760. So that those employers who do not exact anything in case of sickness and partial employment do not bring any grievance on the workmen?—No: but there are very few masters who do not exact anything; it is a rule to take it.

9761. Mr. *Biggs.*] Suppose frame rents were abolished, do you suppose that the middlemen would in that case give the journeymen the wages they get from the warehouse?—No.

9762. They would give them a smaller price?—Yes.

9763. Would not the same condition of poverty which makes men now submit to these exactions, make them submit also to receive any price that the middlemen chose to give them?—That is the case now, or men could not be found to take work at 2*s.*, and 2*s.* 6*d.*, and 3*s.* a week, which many of them do.

9764. Then if this Act of Parliament were passed, and the present system of frame rents and charges were abolished, but the present depressed condition of the trade and the present want of demand continued, do you think the workmen would receive more than they receive now?—I believe not.

9765. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think it is a fair way of considering the matter, that the exaction of frame rents under a depressed condition of trade, involves, at the expense of wages, a larger share of the proceeds of the manufacture being taken by the employer, who is the owner of the frame, than is just or fair?—I do not think that the manufacturer does get a larger share of the proceeds of the manufacture, as a rule, than is just and fair; it falls into the hands of the middleman, I think, generally.

9766. The middleman being the employer?—Yes.

9767. And having the distribution of employment?—Yes.

9768. You think the effect of it is to divert to him a larger share than is just?—Undoubtedly.

9769. Is not the effect of a workman having to pay constant frame rent to prevent him from taking to other employment?—Undoubtedly not; men are trying to get into other employment in great numbers; in many cases they succeed, but in other cases they cannot succeed. I know men who would willingly go to other work, and if they could get 6*s.* or 7*s.* a week regular wages, they would be very glad to-morrow to give up their frames.

9770. But so long as a man has a frame, and is subject to a constant charge, does not that keep him constantly at work at the frame, and prevent his doing anything else?—Unless a man can see anything which he can obtain labour at elsewhere, he sticks to his frame; and it is astonishing to me how some men do stick to it. There are nine in family at our house, and I have taken 18*d.* home many times for my week's wages.

9771. They stick to it with the object of meeting the weekly demand that is made upon them for frame rent, do they not?—No; they stick to it with the object of getting a trifle at the week's end; they are not anxious to pay the frame rent.

9772. But they must pay it?—They must pay it.

9773. And, in order to pay it, it is necessary for them to make something of the frame?—Yes. In one case a master that I worked for told me that, if I did not pay rent for my frame, he should let it; I asked him whether there was any work for it, whether he had any in hand, or any immediate prospect of any, and he said he had not. I said, "I tell you what; I will never pay rent for a frame when I have no work to do; give me work first, and I will pay rent in proportion to the amount of work I have to do." Now that was a frame that I had earned 8*s.* or 9*s.* a day in when I had work; it was at this time of the year; I went to work as soon as it was light in the morning, and worked till it was dark, never leaving the shop, and then I earned 8*s.* or 9*s.* a day; it was fine silk work. I

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did that by close application; but when that work fell off, I told the master I would not pay him frame rent for any frame that had no work to do.

9774. What was the result of that; did you keep the frame, or did you give it up?—I kept the frame. The master of course could not let the frame without work to do in it. I knew that; I knew the frame was as sure to me as to another man, unless he had the prospect of giving out work. If there had been a prospect of work, I should have been very cautious, because I would rather have paid a little rent than lose my frame, for it was an excellent frame, and the work I did on it was excellent work to do.

9775. Would you have been compelled in that case to pay rent, in the hope of getting employment sooner or later?—No, I would not; unless I could have had the prospect of work in two or three weeks I would not have paid rent; if he could have ensured me work in two or three weeks I would have paid rent for that time in order to secure the frame.

9776. Mr. *Gardner.*] You say that many men in your neighbourhood would be glad to get any employment you could give them for 6 *s.* or 7 *s.* a week, but that they do not succeed in getting it; are those old men or men otherwise disabled, or are they able-bodied men?—Some of them are able-bodied men, but they would not be able to go to laborious work such as an able-bodied labourer would. I have done it myself. I worked at a paint manufactory for some three years. I went with a determination to do it; when I first applied to him, my master told me I could not work at it; that I should not have strength. I begged him repeatedly to allow me to try, and if I did not succeed in giving him satisfaction by the amount of labour I performed I begged he would discharge me; but I stayed with him some three years until he wished to make me a sort of foreman and timekeeper; I could not undertake that, and then he gave me notice to leave.

9777. Is there a great superabundance of labour in Nottinghamshire at present?—I believe not; employment is very scarce; I know a number of labouring men who cannot obtain employment.

9778. Do you mean in all branches, or in some only?—Some branches are tolerably good, but as a general rule employment is very scarce.

Mr. *Thomas Whittaker M'Callum*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *T. W. M'Callum.*

9779. Mr. *Cheetham.*] YOU are, I believe, Manager for Messrs. Ward & Co., at Belper?—Yes.

9780. Do you know how long that firm has been in the hosiery trade?—Perhaps from 40 to 50 years.

9781. How long have you been connected with it?—About 20 years.

9782. I believe your operations are very extensive?—Yes, they are.

9783. Both in cotton and silk?—Yes; and we use the improved machinery and the old machinery also.

9784. How many frames do you employ in the whole?—We have eleven hundred and odd of our own.

9785. Do you employ any independent frames?—Yes; we employ many which are held by middlemen, and which we cannot account for. We do not rent any independent frames at this time, trade being flat.

9786. Can you state the number you keep in employ through middlemen?—No; we have no check upon that.

9787. Can you give the Committee a statement of the rents you charge for those frames of your own which you let out to your workmen?—We charge for narrow frames 10 *d.* per week on 24, 26, and 28 gauges, and 1 *s.* upon all above in the narrow frames; and up to 23 inches, I believe, in the wide frames, we charge 1 *s.* 6 *d.*; for frames 26 inches wide we charge 1 *s.* 9 *d.* upon 30, 32, and 34 gauges.

9788. The rent being proportionate in every case?—Yes.

9789. Do your own eleven hundred frames work direct to the warehouse?—No; many of them do, and many of them are held by middlemen.

9790. Can you tell us what deductions you make on these frames of your own?—We make no deductions except the rent I have named.

9791. Have you any fines for inferior work?—Sometimes, when the work is brought in to me done in an inferior manner, I make a deduction, or give the hand the option of taking the work back again, but that very seldom occurs.

9792. In that case the complaint is evident to the workman himself?—Yes.

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9793. How do you act when you are not able to find full employment for the frames; you find, I suppose, that there are seasons when you are obliged to give out less work than can be done upon your frames?—Yes; at such times I put on what I call a stint, but that is only to prevent our having goods made by other people's machinery. I allow a workman to do as much work as he usually does upon our machinery, but I should not give out half as much again as our frames would produce.

9794. How do you proportion the payment of rent?—I charge rent for the one, or two, or twenty frames we own, and give out work sufficient to employ that number of frames.

9795. In cases of sickness, how do you deal with the workmen, as regards the rent?—I have never charged rent in cases of sickness. There is a widow woman who has worked to me for two years; she has lost her husband, and has had bad health; and I find by our books that although if I had charged her full rent she would have paid 5*l.*, she has in fact paid me only 3*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.*

9796. So that in a case of sickness you do not take the full rent, but only a proportionate part?—I universally take it according to what the hands have brought in. If a hand comes in to me with work, and says he has been ill, and if he brings five dozen of hose, at 10*s.* or 11*s.* a dozen, I should take 5*s.* as rent, even if I might have taken 20*s.*, according to the usual rental.

9797. You proportion the rent to the quantity of work done?—Yes.

9798. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you take any means to satisfy yourself that the statements made to you by the hands are accurate, or do you take their word when they say they have been ill?—No; our hands are generally respectable, and I take their word. We seldom change our hands. I know them all well, and rely upon their word.

9799. Mr. *Cheetham.*] So that the principle of employing frames for the sake of the rent, when you really do not require any work to be done upon them, is not acted upon by your house?—No; we perhaps employ them more than we should in consequence of the rent; we make that a consideration, no doubt.

9800. In consequence of that, you give out employment when it would be perhaps your direct interest not to make the goods?—Yes.

9801. And to that extent the workmen are benefited by your finding them such employment?—Just so.

9802. But you do not spread the work over a number of frames, for the mere sake of obtaining rent from the whole of them?—I have never done so.

9803. It has been stated as a matter of complaint on the part of the workmen, that a man absenting himself, say during harvest, and obtaining other employment, has had to pay frame-rent; do you consider that to be a well-founded complaint or not?—I believe that rent has sometimes been taken when a man has been employed at harvest work.

9804. But supposing a man has gone to this harvest work to suit his own convenience without consulting his employer, would you consider that you were acting improperly in deducting the rent?—No; I think not.

9805. Mr. *Biggs.*] His leaving his frame and going to harvest work might be a source of inconvenience to the manufacturer, might it not?—Exactly. I know that in a flat time we have not charged the rent when they have gone out to harvest work.

9806. Mr. *Cheetham.*] But that was because you did not require their labour?—Yes.

9807. And, therefore, they had your sanction in thus seeking other employment?—Yes; at the present time, for instance, I should allow any of the fashioned hands to go to harvest work, and not charge them rent.

9808. Lord *J. Manners.*] Whether the exaction of rent during harvest time is a grievance or not, would depend, of course, upon whether the workpeople went to the harvest against the wishes of their employers or not?—Exactly so.

9809. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Do you adopt the poundage system in any part of your business?—I believe that in the silk department it was adopted some years ago by a party who is not now with us; but I do not know the reason why he adopted it.

9810. That was confined to the silk department?—Yes; I never did it myself in the cotton department.

9811. Do you know whether it is still continued in your silk department?—I believe

believe it is partially. It is left optional with the hands; if they like to go on that system for three months, they can do so.

9812. Can you speak from your recollection what deduction you made in that poundage system?—I inquired and found it was 18*d.*

9813. Do you mean 18*d.* in the pound?—Yes.

9814. Mr. *Biggs.*] That was in lieu of frame-rent?—Yes; it was done because the silk branch being much more fluctuating than others, there was sometimes a great scarcity of work, and I believe the hands wished it, and that their wish was complied with.

9815. Mr. *Cheetham.*] But where in the cotton department you employ the frames more continuously, you have had no demand made upon you by the men to adopt that system?—Never; they never named it to me.

9816. Did that poundage system apply to the workmen working direct to the warehouse, or simply to the middlemen?—It applied to both, I believe.

9817. So that in that case it was really what may be called a net system?—Yes.

9818. Do you see any difficulty in carrying out a similar net system in the cotton department?—In some cases I consider it would be a loss to us, and in others it would be a gain. In a flat time, like this, we have a great deal of work crowding in upon us which is not made by our own machinery, and it requires a great deal of vigilance to prevent it, and if a net system were adopted we should receive profit made on other machinery, and therefore we should not have to exercise the same degree of vigilance that is necessary now, to avoid being inundated with goods. Then, on the other hand, at a time when we wanted goods and there was a demand for them, our machines would be liable to be worked to other people, and we should have no check upon it.

9819. Do you think you would have less check under the net system than you have under the present system?—Yes.

9820. And therefore that, in order to carry out the net system efficiently, it would be necessary to adopt the factory system?—Decidedly.

9821. Have you looked at the earnings of your workmen, so as to be able to give the Committee any information upon that point?—Yes, I have.

9822. *Chairman.*] What is the paper before you?—In order to make myself acquainted with the usages between the middlemen and the journeymen, I went over to Sutton on Monday last, and got some information from them, which I have put together here.

9823. Mr. *Cheetham.*] That refers to middlemen?—Yes.

9824. Have you any statement as to the earnings of the workmen who work direct to you?—Yes; I merely took two. There is one man who works direct in fashioned frame; he is a man about 60 years of age; he has worked to us for many years, and he makes a dozen a week, at 11*s.* a dozen, and has one shilling deducted for rent by us. He draws regularly 10*s.* a week from us, week after week.

9825. He is 60 years of age, you say?—Yes, and he is an old pensioner besides.

9826. Mr. *Mundy.*] In what branch is that?—The fashioned wrought hose.

9827. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would it be correct to say, that the average earnings of your workmen in the cotton department are 10*s.* a week?—No; it would vary from 7*s.* to 12*s.* in the narrow frames. A very good hand would earn 12*s.* a week, working a fine frame, and he might get a little more, working a very fine frame.

9828. Mr. *Mundy.*] Are those net wages?—Yes, when the rent is deducted.

9829. Lord *J. Manners.*] That applies to those who work direct to you?—Yes; and those who do not, in the fashioned branch generally, pay 4*d.* a week to the middleman.

9830. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Have you wider and better frames, working direct to you, than these narrow ones?—Yes.

9831. What are the average earnings of the men working in those frames?—The earnings of those men, as stated to me by themselves, are from 9*s.* to 21*s.* 11*d.*

9832. That is, supposing them to have full employment?—Yes; a middleman showed me the book, and showed me the wages that they had received for 20 weeks.

9833. You, of course, leave to the middleman the control of the workmen employed by him?—Yes.

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9834. But you have been making some inquiries, have you not, among the middlemen you employ, as to the deductions they make and the system they adopt with regard to the workmen employed by them?—Yes.

9835. You have employed a middleman at Sutton, I understand, of the name of Hepworth?—Yes.

9836. What is the system he adopts with regard to the deductions he makes from the earnings of the men he employs?—I have his statement here; he says, "I am a middleman, and employ about 90 hands; hold 60 of my own, 23 of Ward & Co. The rents I pay for my frames are as follows: 21 in., 1 *s.* 6 *d.*; 26 in. and above, 1 *s.* 9 *d.* Charge to men, 1 *s.* 9 *d.* and 2 *s.*; if narrowing attached, 1 *d.* extra. On all goods I make I charge 3 *d.* per dozen. I charge no rent if the frame stands, either from illness or want of work, and never knew rent charged in Sutton in either case. The profit I get upon the machinery no more than pays my loss upon frames standing and the cotton I lose among the hands. I charge no more for 32 and 34 gau. than 30 gau.; therefore the statement I give includes these gauges. These include all the deductions I make in a flat time. I invariably charge rent according to the work they bring in. I generally ask the hands what rent, and take what they say, and never have any altercation with my hands on this point; if two, three, or four dozens, I take rent accordingly. The hands make, in the qualities of work I make, 6 to 10 dozens per week. Tops at journeyman's price, 30 gau., 2 *s.* 4½ *d.*; 32 gau., 2 *s.* 7½ *d.*; 34 gau., 2 *s.* 11 *d.* on hand. A good hand makes 10 dozens per week of 30 gau., at 23 *s.* 9 *d.*, and has to pay 3 *d.* standing, 1 *s.* 3 *d.* winding, rent, 2 *s.* 1 *d.*; needles, 1 *d.*; fat, 1 *d.*=3 *s.* 9 *d.*, leaving 20 *s.* clear. A moderate hand would make eight dozens, and the same expenses, except winding, which would be about 1 *s.* per dozen. The paper I produce is the pay sheet to my hands on the 9th of June, which is a very flat time: Mrs. Procter, two frames of her own, 11 dozens at 2 *s.* 1½ *d.* =1 *l.* 3 *s.* 4½ *d.*; worked by two sons, 17 and 22 years of age. They pay me nothing in shape of charges, and the frames being their own, and in their own house, have only to pay needles and fat, 2 *d.*; the mother winds. If times were better, they would make at least four days more, 8 *s.* 6 *d.* in addition. If the rents were done away with, the father and mother would have to charge them for wear and tear of the frames; the father is too old to work, and the rent of the frames he lives upon, with the assistance of his sons and wife's winding. This is the first case on my sheet, and have not the slightest idea of your coming until I saw you. Cases similar to this are quite common in Sutton. Working men who can save a little money lay it out in frames. I know of many cases. My father and mother have three frames; they receive the rents, and are past work, and the rent of these frames keeps them off the parish; it is all they have to depend upon, unless I assist them. My mother had a little money left by an uncle, and purchased these frames; they cost severally, 21–32 gau., 11 *l.*; 27–32 gau., 26 *l.*; 29–32 gau., 27 *l.*; the two latter frames were new, and the 21-inch wanted repairing. The other hands are so mixed up, that I cannot well separate them. The average wages of single hands in Sutton, clear of any charges: 12 *s.*, 14 *s.* 16 *s.*, 18 *s.*, and some 21 *s.*"

9837. Lord *J. Manners.*] I understand from that statement that there was no frame rent in that case; is that so?—No; they get the benefit of that in the family; the sons pay the father and mother the frame-rent.

9838. Sir *H. Halford.*] I understand that, subject to those charges, the workmen receive from the middleman the same price as that which is paid at the warehouse; you are speaking of transactions that are carried on through the intervention of middlemen, those middlemen making certain charges?—Yes.

9839. Those middlemen are paid at the warehouse a certain price for the work that is brought in?—Yes.

9840. And it is a clear understanding that the workmen receive the same price, subject only to those specific charges?—Yes; that is clearly understood, and they all know it.

9841. You think there is a sufficient security that they shall always receive that price; that is, that the middleman will not make a profit to himself by paying to the workman a price different from that which he himself receives from the warehouse?—I think so.

9842. Are you aware of the existence of any framework-knitters' committee at Nottingham?—I am not.

9843. We have heard something of a framework-knitters' committee at Nottingham,

tingham, with the object of securing to the workmen a knowledge of the warehouse price?—Yes; there is one at Sutton; and a man from Sutton has been over to me several times, and I have made him acquainted with the price.

9844. He has been over to you, in the performance of the duties of his office, to obtain that knowledge from you?—Yes; I have had several interviews with him.

9845. Do you think that the interference of such a committee is necessary for the security of the workmen?—It may be in some cases, but I think not generally. With regard to houses like ours, and Morley's, and Brettel's, and Heard & Hurst's, and a few other houses, they know the prices that are paid at the warehouse as well, I believe, as we do ourselves.

9846. But with regard to the manufacturers generally, there may be a necessity, may there not, for the interference of a committee of that sort?—Yes; it might be useful in many cases; I believe that that committee has been useful.

9847. You think that, generally speaking, it is necessary that there should be somebody acting in that manner on behalf of the workmen?—I think it would do no harm, and that it might be calculated to do good, if well conducted; but it often happens that committees of stocking-makers get into a berth in that way and very much abuse it; they are not much to be depended upon.

9848. You think there may be some danger in the existence of such a body as that?—Yes.

9849. You are aware, I dare say, of the Ticket Act?—Yes.

9850. Is that Act at all complied with in your neighbourhood?—Not at all.

9851. Do you not think that if that Act were in operation, that is to say, if tickets were required and were delivered, that might supersede the necessity for the existence of such a body as that of the framework-knitters' committee?—It was found to be very difficult to work upon the ticket system.

9852. Owing to the terms of the Act?—Yes.

9853. Are you aware that it is acted upon anywhere?—No, it is not acted on; to comply strictly with that Act would cause an immense deal of trouble to the manufacturers.

9854. Do you think that an Act could be framed with that object that would work conveniently?—No, I think not.

9855. Mr. *Biggs*.] Do you think that such an Act is necessary at all?—I do not; because the qualities of the work made by different manufacturers vary so much, that no specified price could be fixed for a certain number of narrowings of a certain gauge, and so on; one dozen of goods might be worth 2 *s*. more than another.

9856. Would not the same difficulty apply to a right understanding on the part of a workman of the price he is to receive?—The workmen who work to the houses I have named know the kind of work they have to do, and that they have to make it of a certain standard quality.

9857. But if the requirements are complicated and difficult, does not the same difficulty apply as between the workmen and the employer?—No; if a workman knows what house his work is intended for, he knows that he has to make it up to a certain standard quality; and if he were working to some other houses I could name, he would know that he would have to make it of a very different quality.

9858. If all that is so clearly known by the workmen, how is it that there is a difficulty in expressing it in a written agreement?—There is a difficulty in it; one is that there are so many grades, and so many different modes of producing the same article.

9859. A workman I presume generally has confidence in the honour of the employer, and therefore does not require it. Is not that so?—Yes; the workmen generally have confidence in the houses I have named, and no doubt in many others also; but there are houses in which they have no confidence.

9860. And in that case the interference of such a body as that of the framework-knitters' committee becomes necessary?—Yes; it keeps them rather up to the mark.

9861. Although it is not unattended with some risk and inconvenience?—Yes.

9862. Mr. *Cheetham*.] I believe that, besides this case of William Hepworth's, you have been making some investigation as to the proceedings of the middlemen you employ?—Yes.

9863. It will not be necessary to go into the particulars of each case, because you have found I believe that they generally act upon the same system?—Yes, generally;

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generally; they told me that the system was generally the same all through Sutton, I had them singly, and found the system was the same.

9864. Did you ascertain that their charges were invariably known by the workmen?—Yes, I had two of the workmen in themselves, and they said they were known to a halfpenny; that they knew to a halfpenny the amount of the charges, the prices we paid, and all about it.

9865. So that when they came to receive the result of their week's work there was no charge brought forward against them that they were not previously aware of?—No.

9866. Did you hear anything respecting the feelings of the workmen with regard to any legislation upon this subject?—Although Sutton is the most densely populated place for stocking-making, they seem to know very little about the agitation of this question. Two of the journeymen I saw had never heard of this Bill, and the other had heard of it, but he did not know anything at all about it.

9867. Mr. *Biggs.*] Your inference, then, was, that they did not feel much interest in the question?—Decidedly; there seemed to be no interest felt in it in the place.

9868. Mr. *Mundy.*] Was that at Belper?—In Sutton.

9869. Mr. *Biggs.*] Had you any conversation with them upon the subject?—Yes; with these two journeymen.

9870. Do they expect to derive any advantage to themselves from legislation?—None. They told me that they know now what they have to pay for frame rent, but that if frame rents were done away with, and if deductions were made in an indirect form, they should not know what they had to pay; they consider that middlemen and hosiers too might drop the price paid for their goods 4 *d.* or 5 *d.* a dozen, and that the men who did the most work would have to pay the most rent and charges; and, on the other hand, if that system were adopted, and if a very brisk time were to come, we should have, if a man did not do a fair quantity of work, to remove our machinery from him, and we should have to remove it also from old hands, and women, and slow hands, and put into the hands of those who could do the most work.

9871. Then the old hands, the slow hands, and the women and young people would be thrown out of employment?—Certainly.

9872. Mr. *Cheetham.*] I believe you have a considerable amount of capital invested in machinery?—Yes.

9873. Can you give the Committee any information as to the return that you have upon the capital so invested?—We have 1,108 frames; the original cost of those frames was, 13,766*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.*

9874. Have you any statement of the rents you have received for the last three years?—For three years we have received 6,558 *l.*

9875. And what did you pay for repairs during that period?—We paid for repairs during the same period 3,569*l.*

9876. Leaving a net profit for the three years of how much?—£. 2,988.

9877. How much per cent. do you call that?—Being an average for the three years of about seven and a quarter per cent. per annum.

9878. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you regard that as a fair remuneration for the capital you have invested in those frames?—It is not sufficient.

9879. *Chairman.*] That is after charging interest, of course?—No; we do not charge interest.

9880. That is the whole, then, that you get upon your capital?—Yes. I could select an isolated case, in which a frame has gone 20 years, and cost very little money, and paid, perhaps, 50 per cent.; but this statement which I have here is copied from our ledger, and shows the real state of the case with reference to all our machinery.

9881. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The amount paid for repairs being money expended in keeping up the frames?—Yes.

9882. Supposing you were to come to a valuation and sale of these frames, do you expect they would realise as much as the sum you have mentioned as their original cost, 13,766*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.*?—No; if we had to realise them now, they would not produce half that money; that is the reason why I say that 7½ per cent. is not sufficient.

9883. It will not cover the depreciation that is continually going on?—No.

9884. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you consider that they would not sell for so much as they originally cost, on account of their depreciated value in consequence of wear

ear and tear, or from their depreciated value on account of the circumstances of ıe trade?—On account of the circumstances of the trade. If the trade was very ɔod, the frames, no doubt, would fetch that money.

9885. And you think that an employer is entitled to a guarantee against that ɔrt of depreciation?—I think he is entitled to a greater per-centage upon the apital he invests in frames than 7¼ per cent.

9886. So that if he invests his money in machinery, and that machinery ecomes depreciated in value, you think he is entitled to protect himself, as against ıe workman, against the effects of that depreciation?—I merely say I do not onsider that 7¼ per cent. is sufficient for the outlay of our capital employed in ıachinery.

9887. Mr. *Gardner.*] Do you mean to say, as a man of business, that you have right to do the best you can for yourselves?—Yes.

9888. *Chairman.*] Seven and a quarter per cent. is all you make upon it?—Yes.

9889. Is a profit of 7¼ per cent. above the general average of trade profit?—No.

9890. Lord *J. Manners.*] The 7¼ per cent. is exclusive, is it not, of the ordiary profits of your trade?—Yes; it is a direct profit upon the machinery.

9891. Apart from the ordinary profits of your trade?—Yes.

9892. Can you mention to the Committee any other trade in which a profit to ny amount is derivable from machinery apart from the profits of the trade?—I do ıot know of any other trade wherein machinery is let out on so extensive a scale.

9893. Can you tell us what are the profits of your trade, in addition to the ¼ per cent. profit on your capital employed in machinery?—I cannot; it has ɔeen very small within the last three years.

9894. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Take the case of your own warehouse; you pay a rent, ve will say, for that?—Yes.

9895. That warehouse is essential for conducting your business?—Yes.

9896. It is, in one sense, a machine?—Yes.

9897. Suppose the owner derived a profit of 10 per cent. by the rent you paid ıim, would you, or would any man, have a right to complain of that?—No; we lo pay Mr. Ward, of Cheltenham, about 10 per cent. The warehouse belongs to ı retired partner.

9898. *Chairman.*] You say you make 7¼ per cent. upon the capital employed n this machinery?—Yes.

9899. But you do not first of all charge the ordinary profits of your trade upon hat amount of capital?—No.

9900. It is all the profit you get upon such portion of the capital as is invested n that machinery?—Yes; just the same as if it were a building.

9901. It has nothing to do with the profits of the trade?—No.

9902. It is the sole profit you get from this portion of your capital?—Yes.

9903. Mr. *Cheetham.*] It is similar to the investment of the capital of the retired ɔartner?—Yes; we pay about 10 per cent. upon the building.

9904. Buildings as well as machinery deteriorate in value by reason of age and vear and tear?—Yes.

9905. The fund from whence that deterioration is made good in the case of the ɔuildings is the 10 per cent. that Mr. Ward receives, and in your case the deteioration in the value of your machinery is compensated for by the rent you receive ɔr the use of it?—Yes.

9906. And taking that into account, you say that the 7¼ per cent. that you eceive upon your capital invested in machinery, is not even a fair return for such ın investment?—It is not.

9907. Then, if evidence has been given before the Committee to the effect that here are cases in which 50, 100, and even 200 per cent. has been realised ıpon capital invested in machinery, you can say, from your experience of a busiıess carried on upon a very large scale, that those statements are not correct?—I can.

9908. But if you take the isolated case of a frame which has continued in ɔperation for 20 years, you might probably make out such a case?—Yes.

9909. But would you consider that such a case ought to be presented to any ıan of business?—No; and that is the reason why I have brought forward the esult with reference to the whole of our machinery.

9910. Sir *H. Halford.*] I understood you to say just now that the depreciation was occasioned by the circumstances of the trade, and not by the wear and tear of

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the machinery?—Yes, it is; this machinery does depreciate; it keeps on depreciating, but the money laid out upon it in repairs keeps it up to about its standard.

9911. As regards the wear and tear?—Yes.

9912. But, by way of illustration, we will suppose the case of a capitalist investing money, say at Manchester, in a power-loom, and that then the circumstances of the trade alter, or there is a new invention which renders it a bad investment; he is not, in that case, at all able to repay himself at the expense of the workmen?—No; I am not asking for that.

9913. But the peculiarity of the case, with regard to the hosiery manufacture, is this: that the machinery, being subject to the payment of rent by the workmen, there are means of indemnity which do not exist with regard to other machinery; that is the fact, is it not?—I do not know any other machinery that is let out that pays interest.

9914. There are peculiar means, are there not, on the part of the manufacturing capitalist in that trade, of indemnifying himself, which means do not exist in any other trade, by means of the rent paid for the use of the machinery?—I do not see it at all. It only pays 7¼ per cent., and if the machinery deteriorates in value, the loss falls upon the manufacturer.

9915. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The 7¼ per cent. is earned by your keeping the machinery in employ?—Yes.

9916. Supposing these frames not to be employed, what would then be the result?—We are no more indemnified than the Lancashire spinners are with regard to their machinery. If all this machinery has to stand, we have to bear the loss arising from it. We have no indemnification for the loss we sustain.

9917. What is the motive on the part of a manufacturer for investing any money in machinery?—The motive is to have machinery of his own to manufacture goods upon, and to have them in good condition.

9918. He can preserve the machinery in better condition, and thus keep up the quality of his goods better, by having the machinery under his own control, than he could if he were to use other people's machinery?—Yes.

9919. So that that is his motive; and his inducement is not that he may have a large per-centage upon the capital invested in machinery?—No, there is no such inducement; we would rather be without it.

9920. We have had evidence given before us to the effect that frames are of very small value, and they have been stated to be worth from 3 *l.* to 7 *l.*; can you give us any information as to the prices you have paid for your machinery?—The 24-gauge narrow frames cost 16 *l.* 10 *s.*; 26-gauge, 17 *l.* 5 *s.*; 28-gauge, 18 *l.*; 30 gauge, 19 *l.*; 32-gauge, 19 *l.* 10 *s.*; 34-gauge, 21 *l.*; 36-gauge, 22 *l.* 5 *s.*; 38-gauge, 23 *l.* 10 *s.*; 40-gauge, 26 *l.*; 42-gauge, 27 *l.* 15 *s.*; 44-gauge, 30 *l.*; 46-gauge, 32 *l.*; 48-gauge, 34 *l.*; 50-gauge, 36 *l.*; 52-gauge, 38 *l.*; 54-gauge, 40 *l.*; 56-gauge, 43 *l.* 10 *s.*; 58-gauge, 46 *l.*; 60-gauge, 48 *l.*; and 70-gauge, 160 *l.*; we have a 70-gauge, and only charge 1 *s.* a week rent for that.

9921. Mr. *Biggs.*] What are the widths in all those cases?—Sixteen inches.

9922. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Where you charge 1 *s.* 9 *d.*, what is the gauge?—Twenty-six inches and above in the width, whether 30, 32, or 34 inches in the gauge; the cost of a 30-gauge frame 30 inches wide, would be 31 *l.*

9923. And what would be the rent for that?—One shilling and ninepence. One half of the machinery we have we had made new within the last 20 years, and the other part we have purchased at auctions, or by private contract. We had a great many new frames made in 1835, 1836, and 1837.

9924. Are you acquainted at all with the recent improvements that have taken place in machinery in Nottingham?—Yes, we have some of the circular machines, which have cut out what I used to call cut-ups, a low kind of goods made off the wide frames up to about 3*s.* a dozen; they have cut that class of goods out; and then we have rotary frames and lever frames; we have one frame that makes 12 stockings at once.

9925. As regards the class which make the inferior goods up to 3*s.* a dozen, is it possible for a workman, confining himself to his own frame, making one stocking at a time, to compete with that at any price?—No; not at all; nor the man who works a wide frame.

9926. Even he cannot?—No.

9927. Sir *H. Halford.*] But the cut-ups are of a very inferior description, are they

they not?—Yes; it is a good thing they are done away with; they are made with the circular machines now.

9928. But being so made, they are of a very inferior description to the wrought hose?—Yes.

9929. Mr. *Cheetham.*] But they are still extensively consumed by parties whose means are limited, are they not?—Yes; and they are sold as a low as 1*s.* 11*d.* a dozen.

9930. As to the particular description of goods that are required in the trade, the consumer fixes that by the demand, does he not?—Yes.

9931. And you are obliged to make them according to his wants?—Yes.

9932. What do you think is the result of the recent inventions and improvements in machinery upon the condition of the workmen working on the old frame?—I believe that the men employed on the new kind of machinery will get more money than they could get when employed on the old, and that gradually the new machinery will produce a very great change.

9933. In the condition of the workmen generally?—Yes, in the condition of the workmen generally.

9934. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think there is any danger of the wrought hose frames being altogether superseded?—Never.

9935. The work produced on them is so decidedly superior to that produced on the other machinery, that it will always obtain a sale to a certain extent?—Yes, commencing at a certain price, a sale will be obtained for the produce of the frames, and the new kind of machinery will supersede the frames as regards the low class of goods.

9936. Mr. *Cheetham.*] But the condition of the workmen upon the old machine is one which will necessarily be materially affected by the introduction of the improvements which have been made in machinery?—Yes; I think it will take employment from many of the hands working the old frame, and therefore reduce the quantity of hands making the old kind of work, and that their condition will be improved; by working in the new machinery they will get more money. We had one hand, a girl, working in these circular machines, who left us, two years ago, because she was only making 18*s.* a week.

9937. What would she have earned had she continued working on the old narrow frame?—She had not worked a frame at all before.

9938. What would she have earned if she had worked upon it?—She might have got 4*s.* or 5*s.* a week. Five or six weeks previous to her leaving, she got a guinea a week clear, working on this circular machine; but then wages dropped a little, which reduced her to 18*s.*, and she left.

9939. So that your experience with regard to the new machinery has been, that it has considerably improved the condition of the workpeople employed upon it?—Yes.

9940. But that its results, as regards the workmen working upon the old machinery, must be disastrous?—Yes; I do not think it has been that exactly, because it has struck out the class of men who made the cut-ups, and who were a very ill-paid class; and they, being enabled to make by hand, got into a higher class of work, such as the Sutton and Mansfield work, whereby they get 10*s.*, 12*s.*, 14*s.*, and 16*s.* a week.

9941. Had they continued in the cut-up trade, they would have been ruined?—Yes.

9942. Have you any knowledge of the Hinckley trade?—None.

9943. If the condition of the Hinckley workmen be like that of the cut-up workmen, the result to them must be the same, must it not?—Yes.

9944. Do you think that Parliament can in any way stop the progress of such a course of events?—I think not.

9945. Do you think that legislation, in the direction of abolishing frame rents and charges, would improve the condition of that class of workmen who are thus struggling against the competition of improved machinery?—I think not at all; it would be a very great hardship on one class, the class of fashioned hands, who live chiefly in the country, and many of whom have been stocking-makers for 40 or 50 years, and have wives and families in the country, and some of them homes of their own, and gardens. Some hands come up to Alfreton with goods, and bring their butter and other things to market; some of them keep a cow, and are very clean and respectable people. We have several of that class, and it would be the greatest hardship that could be inflicted upon them if we were to bring them,

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them, and the frames on which they work, from those rural districts, and employ them in the factory.

9946. Sir *H. Halford.*] Do you think it would be a misfortune to them if they could procure frames without paying rent for the use of them; suppose the value of a frame to be as small as it has been stated to be, it might be possible for them, might it not, to procure frames of their own?—Yes.

9947. Do you think they would be in an unfortunate position if they were able to do that?—No; but the first stop that came we should keep our frames going in preference to theirs.

9948. If you did that, it would be for the sake of the frame rent; but my supposition is, that frame rent is no longer to be paid?—If they had frames of their own, we should charge a per-centage upon the goods they brought in; but I look upon it that we should employ no frames but such as we had in our own factory if frame rents were done away with.

9949. Mr. *Cheetham.*] If frame rents were abolished this would cease to be a domestic manufacture, and the frames would be brought into your factory?—Yes.

9950. And that would be prejudicial to the condition of the workmen, would it not?—Yes; and they are convinced of it too; they dread nothing more than frame rents being done away with, and their being compelled to come and live in a large town, and work in a factory.

9951. Lord *J. Manners.*] Did you say that in some badly-paid branch of the trade that change had occurred recently?—Yes.

9952. I think you said you did not think that that change was prejudicial to the interests of the workpeople, but, on the contrary, that it had benefited them?—That was as to one class of work; but the workmen still made another class of work off the same machines, whereby they got more money.

9953. The particular machines were not thrown out of work?—Not at all; they can make different kinds of work off the same machine; that is, the cut-up hose; they can make it from the same machine; by putting narrowing tackle to the same machines they can produce a very superior kind of article.

9954. Mr. *Mundy.*] Are their wages improved?—Yes, very considerably; on the average those cut-up hose did not produce more than 5 *s.*, 6 *s.*, or 7 *s.* a week; and now the average wages the men can earn would be from 7 *s.* to 12 *s.*

9955. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Therefore their condition has been improved by being able to turn to another department of the trade?—Yes.

9956. Had they continued to cling to the cut-ups, they would not have earned nearly so much as they do now?—No; their wages would not have been more than 5 *s.* a week.

9957. Mr. *Biggs.*] Do you consider that the existence of middlemen in the trade is a convenience both to the manufacturers and to the workmen?—Yes.

9958. Do you consider that the charges which are usually made by middlemen are excessive?—Not at all.

9959. Assuming middlemen to be necessary, and that their charges are not excessive, would any alteration in the mode of paying them be likely to benefit the condition of the workmen?—I think not at all.

9960. Must it not create two prices as a necessary consequence; a warehouse price and a middleman's price, if he may not make the charges which he now makes to remunerate himself for his services?—Yes.

9961. You would give the middleman one price at the warehouse, and he would give a smaller price to the workman who did the work?—Yes.

9962. Would not that create a good deal of confusion?—A great deal.

9963. And lead to a reduction of wages in many cases?—There is no doubt that it would be worse than the rent system; I am decidedly of that opinion.

9964. Lord *J. Manners.*] Has it ever occurred to you that a middleman might, in such a case, become the paid servant of the master manufacturer?—I think that would create a good deal of confusion.

9965. Be good enough to say how?—We should have to fix salaries to the middlemen to remunerate them, and that would be a very difficult matter; I do not know how we should be able to carry it out.

9966. I should very much like to know where the great difficulty of fixing a salary to be paid to a servant of that sort would be; take the case of a grocer, or anybody else you like; he is in the habit, I suppose, of sending people out with his goods with a light cart, and that man has to take a considerable amount of trouble

trouble in collecting his master's debts, and delivering his goods, and so forth. Is it the case that in all those trades there is any great difficulty found in apportioning a proper salary for the services of such a man?—But that man would live under the grocer's own eye, whereas these middlemen live, some of them, 18 and 20 miles from us; we should have no direct control over them unless we paid them a per-centage; if we allowed them a salary, they might be attending to our business or not.

9967. *Chairman.*] Would there be any objection to your paying them by a per-centage?—That would be the same thing as paying them so much a dozen.

9968. Lord *J. Manners.*] Have you given your attention to this subject before?—No.

9969. When you speak of great difficulty, you do not mean that there would be any such difficulty as might not be overcome by a little trouble on the part of gentlemen so competent as you are?—No doubt it might be overcome. I think the best way of doing it would be to allow so much per dozen on the quantity of work brought in.

9970. If that were done, two prices would not occur, I suppose?—No. When we took the middleman's work in, we could allow him 2*d.* or 3*d.* a dozen, as the case might be; but we should have to deduct it in the first instance.

9971. But the payment of the middleman in that case would fall on his employer, and not upon the workpeople?—Just so.

9972. I think you have said that your charge varies from 10*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.* for the rent of frames?—Yes.

9973. Who pays those rents?—I charge the 10*d.* to the hands who hold them, upon the first three gauges, and then 1*s.* upon all others; and up to 21 inches, I charge 1*s.* 6*d.*, or 23 inches; and above that, 1*s.* 9*d.* I charge it to whoever holds those frames of me.

9974. These rents, returning altogether 7 ¼ per cent. previous to, and independent of, any profits in the ordinary way of trade, are paid by the working people?—Yes, for the use of the machinery.

9975. And in addition to that, I understand they have to pay a further rent of 3 *d.* in every case to the middleman?—In the wide frames, but not in the narrow.

9976. What do they pay in the narrow?—Nothing.

9977. In the wide frame they pay 3 *d.*?—Yes.

9978. Are you aware whether it is the ordinary rule in the trade for the middleman to charge, in the case of narrow frames?—Yes; the ordinary charge is 4 *d.* for bringing in the work; it is not charged as rent, but as a profit of 4 *d.*

9979. That is to say, the whole charge which the workpeople are subject to is 4 *d.*?—Yes, 4 *d.* to the middleman; many of those single hands live from eight to twenty miles from us.

9980. But in the case of the wide frame, there is a second rent to the amount of 3 *d.* a week paid to the middleman?—Yes.

9981. *Chairman.*] You say that the 7¼ per cent. on capital invested in machinery is independent of other profits of trade?—Yes.

9982. Are there any other profits of trade made in respect of the amount of capital; suppose a person has 100,000 *l.* embarked in this trade, and that out of that 20,000 *l.* is invested in machinery, you say he gets 7 ¼ per cent. on that?—Yes.

9983. He has 80,000 *l.* spent in wages and raw material, and other expenditure?—Yes.

9984. And he receives his manufacturer's profit upon that 80,000 *l.*?—Yes.

9985. But the only profit he gets upon the 20,000 *l.* invested in machinery is the 7¼ per cent.?—Yes.

9986. When you say it is independent of the other profit of trade, you mean that it is independent of the profit which he makes on other portions of the capital he employs in the trade?—Yes.

9987. But it represents the sole and exclusive profit that he makes on that portion of his capital?—Yes.

9988. Mr. *Mundy.*] Out of your 1,100 frames, are there many employed in Belper itself?—Very few.

9989. Do those few work direct to the warehouse?—No; some of them do; families of five or six have them generally round the neighbourhood of Belper, and there are one or two that are master-men, not exactly what we would term bagmen, who let journeymen have them; they have a shop of their own, and have six

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six or eight of these frames in the shop; where the men have so many frames it is at a greater distance from us; we have one man who holds nearly 200 of our narrow frames.

9990. You have not many employed in Belper itself?—No.

9991. Have you no factory in Belper?—Yes; we have a factory.

9992. What number of hands have you employed there?—About 30 of the ordinary frames, and 36 circular machines; the new kind of machine, and seven or eight very wide ones that go by steam power.

9993. Of course there is no middleman there?—No; we put one man in there; he is a kind of middleman too; he is responsible, just the same as a middleman; the whole of the cotton is weighed out to him, and I take the goods in, just in the same manner as though he lived 20 miles off; he superintends the factory the same as he would do a large shop.

9994. How many middlemen do you employ?—We employ perhaps 40 or 50.

9995. Do they entirely work to you, or do they work to other manufacturers?—Some work entirely to us, and many of them work to other manufacturers as well.

9996. You could not, in point of fact, do without them?—No, we could not; the single hands would have to come a great distance with their work; it would cost them a great deal more than the 4 *d.* they pay to the middleman to bring their work in; middlemen are quite a necessary appendage to the manufacture of hosiery.

9997. I think you say wrought-hose frames could not be altogether superseded?—That is my opinion. I think they can never be entirely superseded.

9998. What is your opinion as to the probable effect of legislation upon the condition of the workmen who work in these frames; will it be improved or deteriorated?—I think they will be gradually going out into other branches of the trade, and to other trades; I advise them to do so by all means, and I have often procured situations for them elsewhere.

9999. But still these frames cannot be altogether superseded?—No.

10000. What, in your opinion, will be the probable condition of the men who remain?—If many of them go out, that will of course improve the condition of those who are left in the trade; many young men have gone out to other businesses or trades. I have got many of them situations at collieries, ironstone getting, and so on.

10001. Do you think that those who remain will not suffer more than they do at present?—No; I think not. I intended to have said that, upon goods that I paid 6*s.* 6*d.* per dozen for three or four years ago, I now pay 8*s.*; on all the narrow work made from the 24 gauge up to the 70 gauge, I now pay 18*d.* a dozen more, and have done so the last three or four years, than I did formerly; that advance took place then, and we are paying it now.

10002. Is that for the same kind of goods?—Exactly.

10003. Mr. *Biggs.*] That is in the cotton branch?—Yes; in this very branch you are speaking of; that is, the narrow branch.

10004. Mr. *Cheetham.*] The larger proportion of your cost in the production of hose is the labour?—Yes, decidedly.

10005. So that you have rather a direct interest that the rate of labour should not be depressed, inasmuch as when it is so it affects the value of your stock?—Yes; I would much rather that the rate paid for labour was double what it is, because we should get a larger profit; that is my opinion.

10006. Mr. *Biggs.*] Is it not the fact, that a middleman employing workmen in a shop has to give out the material every morning, to receive it back when the work is done, and to take it in to the warehouse?—Yes.

10007. He has to exercise a daily and vigilant superintendence over the workmen he employs, has he not?—Yes.

10008. Would it be possible for any paid agent from the warehouse, going round from village to village with a horse and cart, and visiting all the workmen employed once or twice a week, to exercise that degree of superintendence which would be necessary to carry on the business properly?—No.

10009. Would his visiting them once or twice a week be sufficient to enable him to exercise that degree of vigilance which you consider necessary?—I think not; it is a very different case from a grocer employing a man to go out with goods; in that case the grocer gives him a certain quantity of goods, for which he is to bring home a certain price; but a man has a great many things to attend to when he superintends the manufacture of stockings; it requires a man to devote his

his whole attention to it; and if we paid a salary to the middleman, I do not think we could ensure his whole services so well as if we paid him by a per-centage; it certainly might be so arranged that we might pay him a salary.

10010. Lord *J. Manners.*] Do you mean that if you paid him a salary he might neglect his work?—Yes, he might not attend to it as much as he does now; now he has a direct interest to get as much work out of the warehouse as he can, whereas, if we paid him a salary, he would not have that interest.

10011. Sir *H. Halford.*] He has no interest in the sale of the goods, has he?—He has an interest in our selling all we can.

10012. But he derives no profit from the sale of the goods?—None at all.

10013. But his profit is derived simply from the charges he makes to the workmen?—Simply from that.

10014. Lord *J. Manners.*] If your proposal of paying him by means of a per-centage were adopted, that difficulty would not arise; he would then have an interest?—Yes, he would have an interest then.

10015. *Chairman.*] You would only pay him a per-centage on work he produced to you done in that workmanlike manner; if he had admitted imperfect work, you would most likely mulct him of his per-centage?—Yes.

10016. Lord *J. Manners.*] But you think that, to superintend efficiently the work he has to superintend, he ought to live on the spot?—Most decidedly.

10017. But he might receive a salary and live on the spot, might he not?—He might.

10018. Mr. *Mundy.*] Your middleman who takes in work from Sutton does not live at Belper, does he?—No.

10019. Then he is on the spot?—He is on the spot.

10020. What difficulty would there be in his superintending the goods immediately under his eye; suppose he lives at Sutton, among the workmen who do the work, is there any difficulty in his having them constantly under his eye, and your paying him a salary?—No.

10021. Do you go over to Sutton to take the goods in?—No.

10022. The middleman lives at Sutton?—Yes.

10023. And brings the goods to you?—Yes.

10024. Then he is living among the workmen, and has the means of superintending the work?—Yes; but I think that paying him a salary would not give him so direct an interest in the matter as he ought to have.

10025. But he lives at Sutton, and not at Belper, now?—Yes, he does; we have a dozen of them at Sutton, I dare say.

10026. They are on the spot already?—Yes.

10027. Mr. *Biggs.*] But whether you were to pay a per-centage or a salary, you could not give the workmen the same wages as you now give?—No; we should first have to reduce the wages by the amount we gave the bagmen.

10028. So that the wages would be left just the same as they are now?—Yes.

10029. Mr. *Cheetham.*] Would it remove the grievance that is complained of on the part of the workmen?—No.

10030. Lord *J. Manners.*] If I understand your evidence correctly, they have no grievances to complain of; you do not take rent in cases of sickness, and you do not take rent in cases of partial work; you are aware, however, are you not, that there are complaints made by the workmen of grievances to which they say they are subject?—Yes.

10031. But assuming that the workmen are, in point of fact, subject to stoppages in cases of sickness and in cases of partial work, do you think that a change in the mode of remunerating the middlemen would be agreeable to the working people, even although it might not necessarily raise their wages?—Yes, I think that, supposing the middlemen to make unfair exactions from the workmen, it would remedy the condition of the working men if a change were made.

10032. Sir *H. Halford.*] Does the middleman now make the bargain for the workmen with regard to the wages they are to be paid?—Yes.

10033. The bargain as to the amount to be paid is made between the manufacturer and the middlemen?—Yes.

10034. The middleman himself having no interest in the amount of wages received, but only in the charges which he makes himself?—Just so.

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APPENDIX.

Appendix, No. 1.

PAPERS delivered in by Mr. *G. Buckby*, 11 May 1855.

(Referred to in Answer to Q. 1649.)

THE following few cases, out of many exorbitant exactions from the earnings of framework-knitters, is, we hope, sufficient to justify Legislative interference :—

CASE No. 1.

A man working a four-hose frame was compelled, through sickness, to leave off work on the Wednesday previous to last Christmas. He was taken on the funds of his sick society the following day (Thursday), and communicated the same to his master, who immediately let the frame to another workman, and charged him half a week's rent and charges. The sick man sent his wife to receive for the three days' work he had done previous to his illness; but although the master had stopped half a week's expenses from the hand that took the frame on the Thursday, he stopped a full week's rent and charges, or 5 *s.* 1 *d.* out of 7 *s.* 1 *d.*, leaving net to the sick man, 2 *s.*, while the master had a week and a half's charges for the one week.

CASE No. 2.

A man worked direct to a warehouse in last November 1853, who was only allowed to make three dozen of hose, at 1 *s.* 3 *d.* per dozen, for a week's work, making a total of 3 *s.* 9 *d.*, from which was deducted by the manufacturer, 2 *s.* 9 *d.*; he had then to pay for stitching 3 ½ *d.* per dozen (10 ½ *d.*), leaving net to the man, 1 ½ *d.*

CASE No. 3.

A number of hands working various widths of frames in a straight-down hose shop in the Wharf-street district, were for many weeks previous to last Christmas not allowed to earn more than from 11 *s.* to 11 *s.* 6 *d.*, from which was exacted full rent and charges, and other shop expenses, leaving in no instance more than 5 *s.* 6 *d* .net to the workman.

CASE No. 4.

The following is a correct copy of a certificate of the earnings of a man named Thomas Mawby, signed by his employer, when applying to the parish for relief, and which was given to us by one of the Poor-law Guardians forming the Board, to whom he (Mawby) had applied for relief.

Copy of Earnings.

		s.	*d.*
1853:	December 31 - - - -	1	6
1854:	January - 7 - - - -	1	6
„	January - 14 - - - -	3	6
„	January - 21 - - - -	3	6
„	January - 28 - - - -	3	9
„	February 4 - - - -	3	–
	TOTAL - -	16	9

The manufacturer by whom Mawby was employed states, at the bottom of the certificate to the Board, that his expenses would average 1 *s.* per week from the above, leaving net wages in the six weeks 10 *s.* 9 *d.* or 1 *s.* 9 ½ *d.* per week.

Appendix, No. 1.

Case No. 5.

A certain manufacturer of this town will not allow more than 8*s.* (gross) to his workmen in the wrought-hose branch, per week, from which standard he has intimated his intention of reducing, and invariably deducts full rent from this 8*s.* The journeymen are subject to the following stoppages:—Rent and charges, 2*s.*; stitching, 10½*d.*; firing, 3*d.*; candles, 4*d.*; needles, 1*d.* Total deductions, 3*s.* 6½*d.* from 8*s.*; net to the workman, 4*s.* 5½*d.*

Case No. 6.

A bagman holding many wide frames, making straight-down hose, has been for many weeks short of employment. The workmen agreed, in order to spin out their small earnings as far as possible, to wind the yarn for themselves, and thereby save the expense. The winding for wide frames would take a hand, on an average, one-third of his time. Notwithstanding this great hindrance to the workmen, the master not even then had sufficient amount of work to fill up their time; yet he (the master) invariably deducted full rent and charges, which were as follows:—For a two-hose frame, without winding, 2*s.* 9*d.*; for a four-at-once frame, without winding, 3*s.* 9*d.*, and in many cases 4*s.*; candles, 4*d.*; needles and firing, 4*d.*; making a total stoppage, in the one case, of 3*s.* 5*d.*, and in the other, 4*s.* 5*d.*, while the workman's net earnings were not more than 5*s.* per week, and in some instances as low as 2*s.* per week.

Case No. 7.

The following is a correct copy of a certificate of the net earnings of a man named William Whitmore, after full rent and charges had been deducted, and which was given to us by the relieving officer of the district to which the man belonged:—

Copy of Earnings.

		s.	*d.*
1854:	February 18	3	6
„	February 25	2	–
„	March - 4	1	6
„	March - 11	2	–
	Total	9	–

His master informed us, that his frame rent and charges, including candles, firing, and needles, in the four weeks, came to 10*s.* 4*d.*, exclusive of stitching. Although this poor man had a sick wife at the time, his charges amounted to 2*s.* 4*d.* per week, while his ne wages amounted to only 2*s.* 3*d.* per week.

(Referred to in Answer to Q. 1663.)

Suggestions of the Framework-Knitters, to restrain by Law the Stoppage of Frame-rent and other Charges from the Earnings of their Labour, and to secure the Payment of Net Wages throughout the Hosiery Manufacture.

The framework-knitters, in seeking this change, have no desire to lessen the value or destroy the right of private property; they wish the interest derived from that source to be realized from the sale of the goods, and not in any way mixed up with their wages.

They also desire to place the independent frames in the same position as that of house and land property, and the rents recoverable in like manner. They cannot understand why an advantage should be given to this kind of property over any other, by having the interest mixed with and stopped from their earnings.

To prevent any loss being sustained by the owners of frame property, the workmen are prepared to allow from their present rate of wages an equivalent for the existing rates of rent and charges, and henceforth to have their earnings, whatever the amount may be, free from any stoppage.

(signed) *Joseph Elliott.*
George Buckby.

Appendix, No. 2.

PAPERS delivered in by Mr. *Joseph Elliott*, 11 May 1855.

(Referred to in Answer to Q. 1756).

AMOUNT of RENT, MIDDLEMAN'S CHARGES, and other Expenses attending the Narrow Wrought Hose, &c., Plain Sock Frames.

Inches in width	15	16	17	18
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
Amount of rent	1 –	1 –	1 –	1 3
Master's charges	– 6	– 6	– 6	– 6
Winding	– 6	– 6	– 6	– 6
Needles, light, and firing	– 5	– 5	– 5	– 5
Amount in Total	2 5	2 5	2 5	2 8

AMOUNT of RENT, MIDDLEMAN'S CHARGES, and other Expenses attending the Glove, and other Fancy Frames.

Inches in width	15	16	17	18
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
Amount of rent	1 6	1 6	1 6	1 6
Master's charges	1 6	1 6	1 6	1 6
Winding	– 7	– 7	– 7	– 7
Needles, light, and firing	– 5	– 5	5 5	– 5
Amount in Total	4 –	4 –	4 –	4 –

AMOUNT of RENT, MIDDLEMAN'S CHARGES, and other Expenses attending the Wide Frames.

Inches in width	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
Amount of rent	1 6	2 –	2 3	2 6	3 –	3 3	3 6
Master's charges	1 –	1 –	1 3	1 6	1 6	1 6	1 6
Winding	– 9	– 9	1 –	1 3	1 3	1 3	1 6
Needles, light, and firing	– 5	– 5	– 5	– 5	– 5	– 5	– 5
Amount in Total	3 8	4 2	4 11	5 8	6 2	6 5	6 11

Appendix, No. 2.

(Referred to in Answer to Question 1770.)

Width and Value of an excellent Class of Narrow Frames, including Wrought-hose Socks, Gloves, and Fancy Frames.

Inches in width	15	16	17	18
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Amount in value	4 10 –	5 – –	6 – –	6 – –

Width and Value of an excellent Class of Wide Frames.

Inches in width	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Amount in value	6 – –	7 – –	10 – –	15 – –	15 – –	17 – –	20 – –

Frames may be purchased for half the above value, and will pay the same amount of rent.

Leicester, 10 April 1855.

(Referred to in Answer to Question 1781.)

The Total Amount of Earnings and Deductions for Frame Rent and Charges of Eight Men while upon a stint of Employment in the Cut-hose Branch.

	£.	s.	d.
Gross earnings	4	–	9
Deductions	2	2	1
Net earnings	1	18	8

The same Amount Earned upon the Net Payment System, after 2¼*d.* per Shilling is deducted as equivalent for Rent and Charges, as agreed to by Workmen and Employer.

	£.	s.	d.
Gross earnings	4	–	9
As above deducted	–	15	2
Extra for winding	–	5	4
Net earnings	3	–	3

The Total Earnings and Deductions of Five Cut-sock Hands while upon a stint of Employment.

	£.	s.	d.
Gross earnings	1	7	7½
Deductions	–	16	1
Net earnings	–	11	6½

The same Amount Earned upon the Net Payment Principle, after a Deduction of 2¼*d.* per Shilling.

	£.	s.	d.
Gross earnings	1	7	7½
Allowed as above	–	5	2¼
Extra for winding	–	1	4
Net earnings	1	1	1¼

The

The Total Earnings and Deductions of Four Glove Hands while upon a stint of Employment.

	£.	s.	d.
Gross earnings	1	6	8
Deductions	–	13	5
Net earnings	–	13	3

The same Amount Earned upon the Net Payment Principle, after a Deduction of $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ per Shilling.

	£.	s.	d.
Gross earnings	1	6	8
Allowed as above	–	5	–
Extra for winding	–	1	–
Net earnings	1	–	8

The Total Earnings and Deductions of Five Shirt Hands in Rotary Frames while upon a stint of Employment.

	£.	s.	d.
Gross earnings	4	1	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Deductions	3	2	10
Net earnings	–	18	$4\frac{1}{2}$

A few instances of Exactions while on partial Employment.

NAME of WORKMAN.	NAME OF EMPLOYER.	SORT OF WORK.	GROSS EARNINGS.	DEDUCTIONS.	NET EARNINGS.
			s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
A.	Messrs. R. & G. Marston	Cut hose	12 4	6 6	5 10
B.	ditto	ditto	8 4	4 –	4 4
C.	Edward Atkins	ditto	11 –	5 3	5 9
D.	Mr. Woolmer	ditto	11 –	5 9	5 3
E.	Richard Manship	ditto	12 $8\frac{1}{2}$	6 –	6 $8\frac{1}{2}$
F.	Mr. Rawson	ditto	9 7	5 3	4 4
G.	Mr. Grunday	ditto	10 $8\frac{1}{2}$	5 6	5 $2\frac{1}{2}$
H.	Mr. Hayner	ditto	9 –	4 6	4 6
I.	Mr. W. Bott	ditto	7 $1\frac{1}{2}$	6 1	1 $-\frac{1}{2}$
J.	Mr. Rodwell	Cut socks	7 10	4 3	3 7
K.	Mr. Breward	ditto	12 6	3 9	8 9
L.	Mr. Preston	ditto	5 $1\frac{1}{2}$	2 6	2 $7\frac{1}{2}$
M.	Mr. Williamson	ditto	3 $4\frac{1}{2}$	2 –	1 $4\frac{1}{2}$

There are many narrow frame wrought-hose hands in the town and county of Leicester, whose earnings do not exceed 4*s.* per week, some even less than that sum, but the same amount of rent is stopped from their earnings as from those that can earn twice that amount.

Appendix, No. 2.

(Referred to in Answer to Q. 1782).

These Hands work through Mr. *Hanford* to Mr. *Corah*.

NAMES OF WORKMEN.	GROSS EARNINGS.	DEDUCTION.	NET EARNINGS.	WEEKLY AVERAGE.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
A.	1 5 4	– 8 –	– 17 4	– 4 4
B.	1 8 11	– 8 –	1 – 11	– 5 2¾
C.	1 16 –	– 8 –	1 8 –	– 7 –
D.	1 8 11	– 8 –	1 – 11	– 5 2¾
E.	1 8 11	– 8 11	1 – 11	– 5 2¾
F.	1 5 4	– 7 4	– 18 –	– 4 6
G.	1 5 4	– 7 4	– 18 –	– 4 6
H.	1 16 –	– 8 –	1 8 –	– 7 –
I.	1 10 7	– 8 –	1 2 7	– 5 7¾
J.	1 16 –	– 8 –	1 8 –	– 7 –
K.	1 12 5	– 8 –	1 4 5	– 6 1½
L.	1 8 11	– 8 –	1 – 11	– 5 2¾
		WEEKLY AVERAGE - - - £.		– 5 7

These Hands worked to Mr. *Good* to the firm of Messrs. *J.* & *W. Biggs*.

NAMES OF WORKMEN.	GROSS EARNINGS.	DEDUCTION.	NET EARNINGS.	WEEKLY AVERAGE.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
A.	3 11 3	1 2 –	2 9 3	– 12 3¾
B.	3 14 6	1 2 –	2 12 6	– 13 1½
C.	3 2 2	1 2 –	2 – 2	– 10 –½
D.	2 15 4	1 2 –	1 13 4	– 8 4
E.	2 17 3	– 19 –	1 18 3	– 9 6¾
F.	3 17 8	1 2 –	2 15 8	– 13 11
G.	2 7 6	1 – 6	2 7 –	– 11 9
H.	2 17 6	– 14 –	2 3 6	– 10 10½
I.	3 10 3	1 – –	2 10 3	– 12 6¾
J.	3 13 6	1 2 –	2 11 6	– 12 10½
K.	2 17 –	1 – –	1 17 –	– 9 3
L.	3 4 10	1 – –	2 4 10	– 11 2
		WEEKLY AVERAGE - - - £.		– 11 4

The average earnings of 20 wrought-hose hands employed by Mr. Halmey, and given to me by his overlooker, Mr. Holms, 6*s.* 1*d.* per man free from all expenses.

THE Earnings of a good Class of Workmen in the following sort of Work, and Width of Frames.

	Number of Hose at once.	Width of Frame.	Number of Dozen per Week.	Amount per Dozen.	Total Gross Earnings.	Amount of Deduction.	Net Earnings.
				s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Legging Frames	2	25	9	1 4	12 –	3 9	8 3
	3	30	11	1 6	16 6	4 9	11 9
	4	40	16	1 2	18 6	5 9	12 9
	5	50	17	1 2	19 8	6 6	13 2
Footing Frames	4	20	18	– 8	12 –	3 3	8 9
	5	25	20	– 8	13 4	3 9	9 7
	6	30	22	– 8	14 8	4 6	10 2

The

The following List is given as a fair Average of the Glove Trade.

NAMES OF WORKMEN.	GROSS EARNINGS.	DEDUCTION.	NET EARNINGS.	WEEKLY AVERAGE.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
A.	2 9 –	– 7 –	2 2 –	– 10 6
B.	2 12 –	– 7 –	2 5 –	– 11 3
C.	3 1 6	– 7 –	2 14 6	– 13 7½
D.	2 17 6	– 7 –	2 10 6	– 12 7½
E.	2 3 6	– 7 –	1 16 6	– 9 1½
F.	3 5 4	– 7 –	2 18 4	– 14 7
G.	3 15 6	– 11 –	3 4 6	– 16 1½
H.	1 19 4	– 7 –	1 12 4	– 8 1
I.	3 9 8	– 11 –	2 18 8	– 14 8
J.	2 11 3	– 7 –	2 4 3	– 11 –¾
K.	2 7 4	– 7 –	2 – 4	– 10 1
L.	2 15 8	– 7 –	2 8 8	– 12 2
		Weekly Average - - - £.		– 11 11¾

SIZE and PRICE of List Thread Gloves in 1846 and 1855.

1846.				1855.			
Gauge.	Size.	Width.	Price.	Gauge.	Size.	Width.	Price.
			s. d.				s. d.
36	Men's - -	101	4 1	36	Men's - -	101	2 2
„	Women's - -	97	3 10	„	Women's - -	97	2 –
„	Habits - -	93	3 7	„	Habits - -	93	1 11
„	S. Habits - -	89	3 5	„	S. Habits - -	89	1 10
„	- 6 - -	85	3 3		- 6 - -	85	1 8½
„	- 5 - -	81	3 1	,	- 5 - -	81	1 7½

PRICE of Men's Worsted Shirts in 1839 and 1855.

1839.			1855.		
Gauge.	Width.	Price.	Gauge.	Width.	Price.
		s. d.			s. d.
24	120	7 –	24	120	4 9
24	—	—	24	—	—

A few instances of Imposition experienced under the Stoppage System.

James Dubbleday, worked to Ambrose West in 1854, earned 1 *s.* 9 *d.*, by making three dozen of glove hands, at 7 *d.* per dozen, could have no more work, and all was stopped for rent and charges.

Joseph Robinson worked to Mr. Pendleton, in 1854 he discovered that the work he was ordered to make was far below the trades price; he applied to his master to give the same price as others working to the same warehouse, or to take the charges for the one day he had been at work, from what he had earned, which was 3 *s.* 6 *d.*, but he refused, and kept all the man had earned.

pendix, No. 2.

The Wrought Hose Branch.

This case was received from a Poor-law Guardian, which is, Thomas Mawby tendered a certificate, received from his employer, Mr. Lee, a manufacturer to the Board. When applying for relief, his last six weeks' net earnings amounted to 16 *s.* 9 *d.*; deducted for full rent, 1 *s.* per week; left, net earnings, 10 *s.* 9 *d.*

This case was also received from a relieving officer, and copied from a certificate, given to William Whitmore by his master; his earnings amounted to 19 *s.* 4 *d.* in the four weeks, for rent and charges, 10 *s.* 4 *d.*; four week's net earnings, 9 *s.*

Henry Wood, works to Mr. Kemson, in the firm of Walker and Kemson; he never takes more work in than will amount to 4 *s.* 6 *d.*, first hand; his wife does a part of the work, to make up this sum; he has at times taken in less then 4 *s.* 6 *d.*; but 1 *s.* 6 *d.* has invariably been deducted each week for the rent of two frames.

Mr. Kind, a frame holder to Mr. Corah; he did not receive any work out for seven frames till Wednesday April 11, 1855, but had stopped six days rent for the three and half days' work, when it was taken in on the Saturday, April 14, 1855.

William Russell, works to Mr. Corah; a few week's before Easter last, 1855; the total amount of his earnings, for one week, was 4 *s.*, from which was deducted, for the rent of two frames, 2 *s.*

John Briers, worked to Daniel Bull; November 1853, allowed 14 *s.* 2 *d.*, first-hand, from which was deducted, for rent and charges, 4 *s.* 9 *d.*; after this more work was allowed, from which was deducted 3 *d.* from each 1 *s.* In 1854, was allowed 12 *s.* 6 *d.*, from which was stopped 4 *s.* 9 *d.*; after this was altered, more work, and 3 *d.* from each 1 *s.* stopped as above.

(Referred to in Answer to Q. 1783).

The following are the most important Grievances of which the Framework-knitters complain under the present Stoppage System.

There are many middlemen who hold numbers of independent and other kind of frames, who in a depression of trade, beat round from warehouse to warehouse and take out work under any conditions, as the price of the articles is no question with them, knowing they can, and do stop, from the earnings of their workmen, for framerent and charges, what amount they please, without any responsibility. The evils resulting from this system is felt, not only by the workpeople but by the better disposed manufacturers and middlemen also.

In many instances the first day of the week, and often a great part of the second, is spent in repeated calls by the operatives before they can receive the material to commence work; this is followed by repeated, and in many cases, unnecessary alterations, in order to make a small quantity of work last throughout the week, to insure, with a seeming better grace, full rent and charges.

Many operatives, when compelled to suspend their labour through unavoidable sickness, for days, and in many cases for weeks together, have to pay, not only full rent for the frame, which has sustained no damage through wear, but full charges, said to be for fetching out, doing up and taking in their work, though they have been unable to make any meanwhile.

The operatives have to pay, in many cases, rent and charges for the time it takes in getting their frames to work, repairing accidents, or break-downs.

I also wish to state my desired opinion, that the present mode in stopping framerent and charges, has had the tendency of producing a surplus amount of machinery and of crowding the hosiery trade with a disproportionate population, which become a burthen upon the ratepayers generally.

I, therefore, believe that by passing an Act to restrain stoppages from the payment of wages, under any pretence, would be a benefit, not only to the operatives, but to the well disposed manufacturers and middlemen also, inasmuch as it would give the skilled an equal scope with the unskilled workmen, would place the honest employer in a fair position with the less scrupluous, the encroachments upon the earnings of the workpeople, under the denomination of framerent and charges, prevented, the cause of many disputes between employer and employed removed, an equitable system of remuneration established, a better understanding and firmer confidence created amongst all parties concerned, and the moral and social condition of the labouring poor improved.

Appendix, No. 3.

PAPERS delivered in by Mr. *Robert Walker*, 15 May 1855.

NET EARNINGS of WORKMEN.—Thomas Sutton, Denman-street.

	February				March				April					May	Rent and Charges.	Kind of Work.
	4.	11.	18.	25.	4.	11.	18.	25.	1.	8.	15.	22.	29.	6.		
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
wn - -	9 5	4 7	8 10	10 5	10 5	10 4	5 9	9 7	8 6	6 3	6 3	5 –	5 –	6 10	–	2 hose.
nws - -	15 1	11 9	12 3	18 4	15 8	17 4	17 1	13 7	14 11	12 –	15 4	10 9	17 1	16 6	5 6	6 feet.
Barton - -	6 8	8 4	5 1	3 6	2 9	3 –	3 2	3 10	3 7	3 5	–	–	–	–	–	
l - - -	12 4	15 6	16 1	13 5	8 –	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	
well - -	16 2	15 6	16 2	16 2	15 1	16 8	15 6	15 3	15 7	15 2	15 –	3 –	–	8 10	6 9	4 hose.
uch - -	13 7	14 6	13 6	13 5	13 –	14 4	11 –	16 –	10 –	–	13 3	5 1	13 –	13 –	6 9	4 „
Freer - -	9 8	10 10	8 11	9 1	9 6	–	8 9	7 8	–	10 3	11 6	–	17 10	18 10	6 9	4 „
Freer - -	17 9	18 4	15 8	19 –	16 11	17 8	18 2	20 8	16 11	15 6	10 11		13 8	10 11	7 6	5 „
emen - -	16 11	11 1	11 11	16 6	11 2	–	11 2	14 10	15 5	16 4	17 6	–	14 8	6 4	–	
Freer - -	13 4	12 5	13 4	12 10	11 4	12 5	13 4	15 1	15 4	15 10	–	3 3	11 11	14 –	6 9	4 „
Freer - -	9 9	10 1	10 1	11 5	10 1	13 –	13 5	14 5	5 7	11 7	–	7 8	12 1	14 –	6 6	8 feet.
Gunton -	14 6	9 3	12 7	11 2	8 7	13 8	17 10	14 –	16 4	15 6	16 1	18 –	–	17 4	7 9	6 hose.
born - -	17 9	14 4	15 9	14 9	15 –	16 11	14 –	15 4	–	10 3	14 1	–	5 10	14 1	6 6	4 „
. Gunton	5 9	5 9	6 1	5 2	5 –	6 7	7 11	4 9	–	5 5	3 11	4 –	4 10	5 10	2 9	3 feet.
lt - -	16 7	12 7	13 6	14 –	11 –	13 6	12 1	15 4	16 4	16 7	16 –	–	13 4	15 –	6 9	4 hose.
Knight -	11 4	10 –	7 –	4 7	2 9	4 1	4 1	6 5	4 9	3 10	2 9	–	4 1	4 1	–	wrought-hose.
Kelso -	14 1	14 10	13 –	18 6	10 10	12 –	15 7	13 –	14 2	16 5	13 –	3 –	16 10	13 2	5 6	6 feet.
Kelso -	9 3	11 2	9 2	10 3	7 11	8 –	8 6	8 5	8 11	9 6	10 3	1 10	11 9	9 5	3 9	4 „
ght - -	11 1	15 10	9 9	12 2	11 2	13 10	10 3	13 2	13 8	13 3	12 3	–	10 3	13 1	7 6	5 hose.
erage -	14 4	15 3	14 8	16 –	12 9	14 4	15 3	15 3	13 10	–	12 6	7 2	12 11	11 11	6 3	3 „
in - -	17 4	14 5	10 8	19 5	17 4	13 10	6 10	7 10	15 1	20 3	19 3	–	17 1	16 3	6 9	4 „
. Lewin -	12 2	13 2	7 –	–	–	2 6	–	17 8	7 9	16 3	16 3	9 2	16 1	18 4	2 9	3 feet.
. Menton -	7 8	5 7	6 3	7 7	5 7	4 9	6 6	–	–	–	–	–	4 11	8 11	2 9	3 „
vin - -	9 9	10 7	9 7	8 7	9 10	9 1	10 7	9 10	9 10	9 10	7 3	–	10 7	8 6	6 3	3 hose.
Arthur - -	10 8	10 1	10 6	10 10	9 4	11 –	10 –	11 4	10 10	11 –	–	11 –	–	14 –	6 3	3 „
lip - -	7 11	19 5	12 3	20 1	5 7	13 1	18 –	14 3	18 5	22 2	11 5	13 8	16 2	16 –	7 9	6 „
e - - -	22 2	6 7	12 3	13 8	16 –	15 10	16 6	17 4	18 5	17 4	17 2	–	13 10	17 4	7 6	5 „
r - - -	14 10	14 2	13 7	13 7	12 3	1 6	14 10	14 10	14 10	14 10	14 9	11 3	–	13 1	6 6	4 „
r - - -	21 7	27 6	16 1	22 5	16 5	23 6	21 7	21 3	22 11	29 1	21 6	14 5	12 8	20 9	5 6	6 footing.
th - -	13 8	14 –	13 –	12 –	17 9	15 4	18 3	15 6	18 1	16 6	16 1	13 9	18 3	20 9	5 6	6 „
- - -	14 5	12 –	13 8	14 8	–	14 3	11 –	15 –	13 8	17 4	11 2	11 3	14 1	13 6	6 9	4 hose.
Tew - -	5 2	5 9	6 9	–	6 3	–	–	3 11	7 7	10 1	9 3	7 7	6 10	6 6	2 9	3 footing.
utt - -	5 8	10 –	9 6	11 9	6 11	9 9	9 3	11 7	–	5 3	2 8	–	–	–	6 9	4 hose.
Norton -	17 4	14 3	12 7	13 2	16 5	14 2	3 10	11 1	15 7	12 4	15 7	–	19 5	9 7	6 3	3 „
d - - -	12 7	12 3	11 7	12 1	15 –	13 9	12 5	12 2	14 3	12 8	12 6	–	11 –	12 6	6 9	4 „
ord - -	7 9	9 1	–	–	–	8 4	9 6	17 –	14 6	7 6	11 –	–	10 5	15 8	6 9	4 „
Veston - -	16 7	–	14 7	16 8	15 1	16 7	17 6	16 4	17 2	15 8	15 8	7 –	12 –	13 5	6 9	4 „
ow - -	14 8	15 6	14 4	17 9	13 11	17 6	12 3	14 11	16 4	16 2	17 11	–	17 9	18 8	1 6	5 „
												Easter Week.				

CHILDREN'S SOCKS.—Embrough, Archdeacon-lane.

	March 4.			March 11.			March 18.			March 25.			Weekly Average.
	Gross.	Charges.	Net.	Gross.	Charges.	Net.	Gross.	Charges.	Net.	Gross.	Charges.	Net.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Henry Pegg - -	25 4	6 7	18 9	13 5½	6 7½	6 10	23 9	6 6	17 3	26 1½	6 7	19 6	16 7
G. Springthorpe -	26 3	4 1	22 2	22 6	4 1½	18 1½	20 7½	4 –	16 7½	22 6	4 1	18 5	18 10
F. Wood - -	20 2	5 1	15 1	19 3	5 1½	14 1½	19 3	5 –	14 3	15 7	5 1	10 6	13 6
Richard Pratt -	23 –	5 1	17 11	23 10¾	5 1½	18 9¼	12 9¾	5 –	7 9¾	25 7½	5 1	20 6½	17 3
James Liquorish -	31 3	6 9	24 6	28 5	6 6	21 11	32 5	6 6	25 11	34 1	6 8	27 5	24 11
William Higgs -	22 6	6 3	16 3	25 10	6 –	19 10½	25 10½	6 –	19 10½	27 –	6 2	20 10	19 2
James Clark -	18 –	3 6	14 6	18 –	3 6	14 6	18 6	3 6	15 –	19 –	3 –	15 6	14 10
John Langton -	20 –	3 10	16 2	19 –	3 10½	15 1½	19 1½	3 9	15 4½	20 9	3 10	16 –	15 10
James Willis -	17 7½	4 10	12 9½	17 7½	4 10½	12 9	18 9	4 9	14 –	18 9	4 10	13 11	13 4
Thos. Bowlsworth -	20 –	3 7	16 5	18 –	3 7½	14 4½	14 4	3 6	10 10	20 –	3 7	16 5	14 6
George Bowlsworth	16 –½	4 4	11 8½	16 11½	4 4½	12 7	16 –½	4 3	11 9½	17 8½	4 4	13 4½	12 4
Francis Carnal -	19 8	4 7	15 1	16 7	4 7½	11 11½	10 6½	4 6	6 –½	24 5	4 7	19 10	13 2

WROUGHT HOSE.

One Shilling Rent stopped in every Case.—William Lee, Hinckley.

	March			April					Average.
	11.	18.	25.	1.	8.	15.	22.	29.	
	Gross.	Gross.	Gross.	Gross.	Gross.	Gross.	Gross.	Gross.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
William Wheatley - - -	9 5	8 9	10 2	10 4	9 8	9 8	7 9	8 1	9 2½
James Fawkes - - - -	8 –	12 –	12 –	8 –	9 –	14 6	5 1	9 6	9 9
Joseph Fawkes - - - -	10 –	10 –	10 –	10 –	10 –	10 10	5 10	9 9	9 6½
Thomas Duddle - - -	11 6	11 6	12 –	10 5	10 9	15 3	6 3	11 6	12 4½
James Rivett - - - -	11 3	10 6	10 2	11 –	9 1	9 6	9 2	9 3	10 –
Samuel Hopewell - - -	16 –	14 6	17 5	16 8	12 3	16 –	12 4	16 10	15 –
William Patterson - - -	10 10	10 –	11 6	13 –	13 –	13 8	9 8	10 –	11 5½
,, Wife - - -	6 6	4 4	6 6	5 8	5 8	6 –	4 –	4 4	5 4½
David White - - - -	9 8	10 2	10 2	10 7	10 3	10 –	6 5	6 3	9 2
Edward Brett - - - -	8 1	7 5	7 4	5 5	7 10	8 5	7 4 Easter Week.	7 5	7 – nearly.

Appendix, No. 4.

PAPER delivered in by Mr. *John Baines*, 15 May 1855.

Amount of Earnings by Workmen in Eight Weeks.

	1st Week.	2d Week.	3d Week.	4th Week.	5th Week.	6th Week.	7th Week.	8th Week.	Average.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
ison - - - - -	- 15 9	- 15 9	- 13 6	- 17 6	- 17 6	- 17 3	- 16 3	- 17 3	- 16 4
and - - - - -	- 15 10	1 - 6½	1 - 3½	- 18 10	- 18 10	- 19 -	1 - -½	1 1 6	- 19 4
n - - - - - -	- 14 5	- 12 1	- 11 7	- 15 3	- 18 2½	- 15 -	- 11 6	- 16 3½	- 14 3½
- - - - - -	- 17 3	- 17 3	- 18 3	- 18 3	- 19 6	- 18 -	- 16 9	- 18 -	- 17 10¾
ey - - - - -	- 13 9	- 10 10	- 12 4½	- 13 7	- 12 -½	- 10 9	- 11 9	- 13 3	- 12 3½
- - - - - -	- 13 3	- 14 5	- 15 6	- 13 8	- 12 10	- 12 7	- 11 3	- 11 3	- 13 1
all - - - - -	- 14 2	- 12 6	- 12 1	- 12 6	- 14 3	- 12 -	- 13 1	- 12 1	- 12 10
mith - - - -	1 - 7	- 19 -	- 18 9	- 17 1½	- 18 9	- 16 10½	- 18 6	- 15 7	- 18 1¾
rson - - - -	- 13 9	- 12 7½	- 15 6	- 15 6	- 17 1½	- 13 7½	- 15 3	- 13 7½	- 14 7½
borough - - - -	1 2 -	- 19 1	1 - 3½	1 - 3½	1 - 3½	- 17 3	1 - 9	- 18 10	- 19 10
kins - - - -	- 15 6	- 16 7	- 16 4	- 18 9	- 18 9	- 15 3	- 15 3	- 15 3	- 16 5½
am - - - -	- 16 -	- 17 3	- 15 9	1 - 9	- 16 8	- 15 6	- 18 -	- 15 6	- 16 11
son - - - - -	- 16 1	- 15 11½	- 17 6	- 17 6	- 17 6	- 17 6	- 19 1½	- 17 3	- 17 3½
on - - - - -	- 18 9	1 1 8	1 5 -	- 19 3	1 4 7½	1 3 6½	- 19 6	1 7 3	1 2 5½
t - - - - - -	- 17 4½	1 - 2	- 16 10½	- 18 6	- 16 10	- 17 1½	- 17 1½	- 17 1½	- 17 8
nsend - - - -	- 16 -½	- 16 7	- 18 10	- 18 10	- 18 10	- 17 1½	- 17 11½	- 17 1½	- 17 8
gworth - - - -	- 14 10½	- 13 7	- 17 3	- 17 -	- 15 3	- 18 3	- 17 -	- 16 -	- 16 1¾
lding - - - -	1 3 1	1 3 5½	1 7 7	- 19 7	- 13 7	1 4 -	- 15 5½	- 19 5	1 - 9¼
ner - - - - -	- 13 4	- 13 -	- 11 2	- 13 3	- 12 -½	- 15 -½	- 9 6	- 13 9	- 12 7½
t - - - - - -	1 - 2½	- 17 6	1 2 3	1 2 5	1 - -	1 - -½	- 17 6	1 - -½	1 - -

Appendix, No. 5.

PAPERS delivered in by *Richard Michaux Muggeridge*, Esq., 18 May 1855.

Appendix, No. 5.

2 March 1854.—17 Vict.

A BILL to restrain STOPPAGES from PAYMENT of WAGES in the HOSIERY MANUFACTURE.

[Note.—The words printed in *Italics* are proposed to be inserted in Committee.]

Preamble.

WHEREAS a custom has prevailed among the employers of workmen in the hosiery manufacture of letting out frames and machinery to the workmen, and recovering sums charged for the hire of the same and on other accounts by stoppage and deduction from the wages agreed upon to be paid for the performance of labour: and whereas such custom is inexpedient, tending to abuse and the injury and oppression of the workmen: be it enacted by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Wages to be paid without deductions, and in the current coin of the realm.

I. From and after the *passing of this Act*, all contracts for labour in the said hosiery manufacture shall be made at neat rates for wages for labour to be performed, free from any deduction or stoppage on account of the use of any frame or machine, its standing, or any charges on any pretext whatever, and the said wages so contracted for shall be paid in full, in the current coin of the realm, and not otherwise.

Penalty on employers offending.

II. If any employer in the hosiery manufacture shall bargain to deduct or shall deduct from the wages of any workman in his employ, directly or indirectly, any part of such wages, for frame rent or standing or other charges, or shall refuse or neglect to pay the same or any part thereof in the current coin of the realm, he shall for the first offence forfeit a sum not exceeding nor less than and for a second offence .

1 & 2 W. 4, c. 37.

III. And whereas by an Act of the first and second years of his late Majesty King William the Fourth it is enacted, that every artificer in any of the trades therein-after enumerated shall be entitled to recover from his employer in any such trade, in the manner by law provided for the recovery of servants wages, or by any other lawful ways and means, the whole or so much of the wages earned by such artificer in such trade as shall not have been actually paid to him by such his employer in the current coin of the realm: be it enacted, that in any action, suit, or other proceeding to be hereafter brought or commenced by any workman in the hosiery manufacture as aforesaid against his employer, for the recovery of any sum of money due to any such artificer as the wages of his labour, the defendant shall not be allowed to make any set-off nor to claim any reduction of the plaintiff's demand by reason or in respect of the use of any frame or machine, its standing, or any other charges, on any pretext whatever.

In actions brought for recovery of wages, no reduction to be allowed for use of frames, &c.

Not to prevent the recovery by the employer of any debt due by the workman.

IV. Provided always, that nothing in this Act contained shall extend to prevent the recovery in the ordinary course of law, by suit brought or commenced for the purpose, of any debt due from the workman to the employer.

SESSION 1853.

BILL to secure the PAYMENT of WAGES without STOPPAGES.

IN ADDITION to the objections urged against this Bill by the HOSIERS of NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, the following OBJECTIONS are submitted by the MANUFACTURERS and OWNERS of FRAMES in LEICESTERSHIRE.

1st. THAT should this Bill become Law, and the real object of its promoters be accomplished, namely, the entire abolition of frame rents, a very large amount of capital now invested in frames would be placed in jeopardy. It is estimated that there are about 40,000 frames in the three counties of Leicester, Nottingham, and Derby, the greatest part of which belong

belong to the manufacturers of hosiery, and but a very small and insignificant number to the workmen; and so long since as the year 1788 an Act of Parliament was passed to protect this description of property in the hands of workmen. That if frame rents were abolished, the Act of 28 Geo. 3, c. 55, which imposes penalties upon a framework-knitter "renting or taking to hire" any stocking frames, and not delivering the same up after 14 days' notice, and which also makes it an indictable offence for the person so renting a frame to sell or unlawfully dispose thereof, would be rendered wholly inoperative. That owners would have no other remedy for the recovery of their frames than an action at law, and that workmen might withhold or dispose of the frames intrusted to them without subjecting themselves to any penal consequences. That the payment of rent is also most important as affording evidence of the ownership of frames in the same way as the payment of rent for a house or land is evidence of tenancy, and that in the absence of such evidence great difficulty in the identification of property would be experienced.

2d. That should this Bill become Law, and frame rents and charges of middle-men, be still continued (for the Bill does not render them illegal), such rents and charges would, in practice, be paid to the master at the same time as the wages are paid to the workman. That in order to protect himself against the liability to heavy penalties, the master must go through the form of laying down the full wages in coin, but may immediately take up again what is owing for rent or charges, thus compelling the master to keep two sets of accounts with every workman, namely, a wages account and a rent account, thereby entailing upon all parties much additional time and labour. That such an inconvenient system would soon fall into disuse, and be abandoned by common consent, but that the Bill would be a trap for the infliction of heavy penalties in the event of any disagreement between the master and workman for three months after every such transaction.

3d. That to compel the master to pay the whole of the gross earnings of a workman, and then trust to his honour for the rent of the machine by which he has been enabled to obtain employment, would place the master in a very unfair and disadvantageous position. That the whole of such gross earnings cannot fairly be considered as payable for labour, and that the only rational view which can be taken is that which was adopted by the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of Chawner *v.* Cummings, in which it was held that the wages consisted of the amount due to the workman after deducting rent and charges, the practice adopted being merely the mode of arriving at such amount. That if the master be required to pay the whole of such gross earnings to the workmen, and should either from the goods being ill made, or from any other cause, pay less than the workman thinks to be his due, if indeed any abatement from the rate of wages agreed upon be allowable under the provisions of this Bill, the workman will be enabled to set his master at defiance by withholding payment of his frame rent or charges. That if deductions from wages on account of inferiority of work will not be lawful, then the manufacturer will be compelled to pay for inferior or damaged goods the same wages as for articles well made and free from fault; a result calculated to inflict serious loss on the employer and injury to the manufacture itself.

4th. That the hosiery trade is, and ever has been, to a great extent, a domestic manufacture, a large portion of the work being done at the homes of framework-knitters residing in the towns and villages of the county. That the frames consequently are not under the eye or control of the owner, and that if the proposed Bill were to pass, workmen might use the frames of their employer, either for making up goods on their own account, or for other masters, without the owner receiving any fair or adequate return for his capital. That those manufacturers who do not own frames would by this means obtain a great and very unfair advantage over the proprietors of frames. That the Bill could not, therefore, be carried into effect without a complete change of system, namely, by the adoption of the factory system, which has been already tried, and has not been found to answer the expectations either of the manufacturers or workmen. That it would be impossible to adopt such a change of system without the erection of a large number of new factories and buildings, for which much time and a great outlay of capital would be required; and that such a disturbance of the trade would throw hundreds of women and other persons, whose time is partially employed at home under the present system, entirely out of work, and give rise to great suffering, confusion, and ill-feeling.

5th. That the Bill is promoted by the workmen engaged in the hosiery trade, under the belief that it would have the effect of raising the amount of their wages. That this expectation is founded in delusion and in utter ignorance of the laws which regulate the price of labour. That it is obvious that the expense of machinery and the interest of capital are elements in the cost of production, and will affect the rate of wages equally, whether deducted from a nominal standard of wages under the name of rent, or provided for by any other mode of calculation agreed upon between the employers and the employed.

6th. That the manufacture of hosiery is at the present time in a state of considerable prosperity; that there has been a great demand for labour; that a good understanding exists between masters and workmen; that the derangement of system produced by such a measure as the one proposed would be the fruitful source of dissension and ill-will; and that all attempts by Legislative interference to raise the standard of wages or benefit the condition of the working classes, give rise to expectations which invariably end in disappointment, and are inconsistent with the rights of property, and injurious to the true interests of all parties.

OBJECTIONS to the Bill to Secure the Payment of Wages without Stoppages.

In Addition to the Arguments employed in support of this Bill by the Framework-Knitters of Nottinghamshire, the following Reply to the Objections of the Manufacturers and Owners of Frames, is submitted by the Framework-Knitters of Leicester.

Epitome of Manufacturers' Objections.	Workmen's Reply.
Objection I. — Should frame-rents be abolished, a large amount of capital would be placed in jeopardy. The frame-rents are necessary for the identification of property in frames.	Reply to Objection I.—That it is strange the ownership of frame property can only be identified by paying rent, whilst lace machines (which arose from the stocking frame) in Nottinghamshire and other places pay no rent either in factories or when sent out in single machines. That the owners of such machines have never intimated that their property was in jeopardy. That the owners of frame property, therefore, cannot feel themselves insecure, especially as they hold evidence of possession in the form of jack and sinker moulds, and have their name and number on the cross-bar. That if additional security is required, the workman can sign a book that he has received a frame of a certain description from the said manufacturer. That such evidence as much identifies the property and establishes the claim of the manufacturer to such frames, as the writings of a house prove the claim of the landlord.
II. That the Bill does not render the stoppage of rent and charges illegal. That in practice, therefore, the whole amount must be paid to the workmen in coin, but the master may immediately take up again what is owing for rent or charges, thus compelling the master to keep two sets of accounts (wages and rent); thereby entailing much additional time and labour. That such an inconvenient system would be abandoned by common consent, but that the Bill would render the master liable to heavy penalties in the event of disagreement with his workmen.	II. That should this Bill become law, the middlemen or agents would, from the necessities of their position, make such arrangements with their workmen as to render it unnecessary to keep two accounts. That the transparency of this objection is obvious from the fact that several manufacturers, middlemen, and agents have already carried out the provisions of this Bill without rendering themselves liable to heavy penalties.
III. That to compel the master to pay the whole of the gross earnings to the workman, and then trust to his honour for the rent of the machine, would place the master in a very unfair and disadvantageous position. That if deductions from wages be not lawful, then the manufacturer will be compelled to pay for inferior or damaged goods the same as for articles well made and free from fault.	III. That this objection, like the previous one, proceeds upon the misconception that masters and men would introduce no change in their arrangements, and thus obviate this alleged disadvantageous position. That it has been shown, in reply II., that masters and men are not subject to unfairness by their methods of procedure in accordance with the provisions of this Bill, and that in reference to inferior workmanship the artificer may be made amenable to a law already in existence.
IV. That the hosiery trade is a domestic manufacture, and that the frames, therefore, are not under the eye and control of the owner. That those manufacturers who have no frames of their own would obtain a great advantage over the proprietor of frames. That the factory system has been tried and failed, and if carried into effect would throw hundreds of women and other persons entirely out of work.	IV. That the manufacturers find it convenient to let out frames in numbers varying from five to fifty (and not in single frames) to middlemen, who have an eye and control over such frames. That the interest of such middleman consists in giving satisfaction to his employer by protecting his property, and not in abusing his trust by employing his master's frames on the work of the manufacturer who has no frames. That the failure of the factory system cannot be proved, inasmuch as a respectable firm have carried out the system for upwards of seven years, amidst all the disadvantages of a contemporaneous and opposing system of frame-rents and charges.

Epitome of Manufacturers' Objections.	Workmen's Reply.
	charges. That the system adopted by this firm is honourable and satisfactory to themselves and their workmen is evident from the very fact that it is quite a novelty for any one to leave, and that the moral and social condition of the workmen is improved beyond all precedent in the trade. That it is impossible such a disturbance as is alleged could take place, the demand for labour remaining the same, as the instance here given proves how easily and satisfactorily all parties can accommodate themselves to arrangements which are already in accordance with the proposals of this Bill.
V. That the Bill is promoted by the workmen under the belief that it would have the effect of raising wages. That this expectation is founded in utter ignorance of the laws which regulate the price of labour. That it is obvious the expense of machinery and the interest of capital are elements in the cost of production, and will affect wages equally whether deducted from a nominal standard under the name of rent, or provided for by any other mode of calculation agreed upon between employers and employed.	V. That the Bill is not promoted by the workmen under the belief that it would raise the amount of their wages. That the desire of the workmen is that they be paid in full, such amount as may be agreed upon by the employer and employed. That the frame builder undertakes to produce or recruit a frame for a certain sum. That he estimates his tools, fire, &c., as elements in the cost of production, and pays his workmen net money for labour performed upon the same. That the printer, machinist, and Manchester manufacturer calculate their outlay of capital in implements and buildings, and then pay net wages to workmen. That this Bill only asks that the framework-knitters be paid on the same plan. The workmen know well that the rate of wages depends upon other causes, and that the Legislative interference provided for in this Bill would not in the least affect the rate of wages to be agreed upon by masters and men.
VI. That the manufacture of hosiery is at present in a state of prosperity; that a good understanding exists between masters and workmen; that the derangement of system produced by such a measure would be the fruitful source of dissension and ill-will; and that all attempts by Legislative interference to raise the standard of wages and to benefit the condition of the working classes are inconsistent with the rights of property, and injurious to the true interests of all parties.	VI. That the present favourable state of trade affords a fitting time for the carrying out of a measure which shall have the effect of adjusting the arrangements incidental to the manufacture. That the object of the workmen in supporting the Bill is to prevent the practice of spreading work for the sake of rents and charges. That such rents and charges have an undue influence in the relations of trade, operating as they do to the disadvantage of the honourable manufacturer; and thus form a fruitful source of dissension and ill-will amongst all classes. That the Legislative interference sought in this Bill is not for a positive measure to benefit the condition of the working classes, but to put a stop to those nefarious practices in the regulations of the trade which are subversive of the rights of property, and injurious to the true interests of all parties.

SESSION 1853.

BILL to secure the Payment of Wages without Stoppages.

Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Workmen's Reasons why the Bill should become Law, and the Objections of Manufacturers answered.

Under the provisions of this Bill, the workmen do not seek, or does it confer the right of using a frame whether the property of a manufacturer or other person, without paying a reasonable rent for the same, or does the Bill demand that tools, implements, or any kind of machinery, shall be found for the workmen, without the owner of such property having the

Appendix, No. 5.

the right to let the same for hire, and receive rent for the use of the same; or does it demand that the services of middlemen or overlookers shall be at the command of the workmen, without the said middlemen or others receiving a fair remuneration for such time and trouble; but what the workmen complain of is, that any manufacturer, middleman, or other employer can under the law of custom deduct any amount from the wages of workmen, regardless of the quantity of work delivered to be performed or the time it may take in its performance.

The Commissioner appointed by Her Majesty in 1844, to inquire into the grievances of the framework-knitters of Leicestershire, Derbyshire, and Nottinghamshire, said, on the question of "stinting" the work given out to workmen: "It will be observed, that some of the most respectable of the manufacturers set their faces against this system; it is, however, to be regretted that they form but exceptions to an almost general rule. Time after time the operatives have been stinted to two, three, or four days' work in a week only, for weeks or months together; every obstacle thrown in their way to check their facilities of productions, such as deferred or scanty supplies of the material for manufacture from the warehouse, complaints of the work when made, and heavy abatement, on one pretext or another, deducted from the scanty pittance of wages earned, already narrowed to the lowest limit which would enable them to exist, and pay their rent and charges." * * * "Full frame rent and charges are frequently deducted from reduced earnings of the workmen."

The workmen therefore believe, that the only means of correcting so oppressive an abuse is, to embrace the provisions of the Act 1st & 2d Will. 4, c. 37, to prevent the stoppage of wages for frame-rent and other charges, leaving the owner of the machine to recover any debt through the county courts.

The manufacturers are not generally the employers of the operatives, but the work is let out to a class of persons called middlemen, who engage machinery and other implements and sub-let to workmen at a higher rent than is generally charged by manufacturers and others. Thus a manufacturer in many cases rents frames for the manufacture of hosiery of private parties by the quarter at a weekly rent of 8 *d.* or 9 *d.* and re-lets them to a middleman for 1*s.*, who again re-lets them to a workman to work in and charges him different prices in different departments of the trade. In the glove branch of the hosiery trade, the rent would be to the workman 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, being one hundred per cent. upon the original charge, and in other branches a per-centage similar in amount where the frames are re-let in the same manner.

The weekly charge upon framework-knitters is :—

1st. A profit upon the rent of the frame.

2d. A profit upon the frame standing in the house or shop.

3d. A profit upon the bringing the material from the manufacturer.

4th. A profit for taking the goods back.

5th. A profit upon the money allowed for winding the material.

6th. A profit upon the money allowed for seaming or stitching.

7th. A profit upon the needles used in the machine which is necessary for the manufacture and which forms a part of the frame.

8th. A profit upon the candles or other light which may be used by the workmen.

9th. A profit upon the work allowed when it amounts to more than a certain sum varying from 10*s.* to 14*s.* per week.

10th. A profit upon the doing up of goods, and in some cases a per-centage of 1*s.* 8*d.* in the pound for employment, averaging in the whole from 2*s.* to 10*s.* per week, per workman, and any amount of these charges falling into arrears through sickness or a "stint" in work, are deducted from the first wages that may be earned on returning to health.

The workmen renting frames desire to be placed on the same condition as all others, viz., a chance of appealing against an injustice or extortion, which they have not at present.

This Bill does not interfere in any shape with the present ownership of frames, nor does it in any way interfere with the tenancy, as is stated by the manufacturers' circular.

The 28th Geo. 3, c. 55, secures to all frame owners the right to recover by summary process all frames hired by framework-knitters, and as this Bill does not interfere with the right of hiring or letting, but simply that the rent shall not be deducted from wages, it cannot annul the said right to recover.

The Act also punishes severely all persons disposing of frames, or other persons purchasing them, and by the 6th & 7th Vict. c. 40, no frame can be seized for rent or other debt owing by workmen, and it is there made a misdemeanor for any person to obliterate any mark upon any frame or other implement or apparatus used in the hosiery manufacture.

It

It also gives the right to the owner or his agent, or other person on his behalf, to enter any house, shop, outhouse, or other place for the purposes of inspection.

These two Acts perfectly secure the property of manufacturers and others whether in the shape of frames or material, and we might here add that the owners of frames always keep in their possession a most important part of the frame, viz.—the jack and sinker moulds, which are always looked upon and respected as the deeds and ownership of frame property.

The workmen do not require, nor do they expect, to receive the same amount of wages for the same quantity of work where no frame rents are demanded as they do now, in proof of which, we beg to refer to the rules and regulations adopted by the Messrs. Brown and Preston, the Messrs. Biggs, and others who adopted this plan several years ago, and who petitioned the House of Commons in 1847 to abolish frame rents by law, stating, as they did, the advantages they derived from the change, and which has been maintained by several to this day.

The manufacturers complain in their circular that all power of deducting wages for defective work would be abolished by this Bill, a statement which we conceive to be at variance with fact, for the manufacturer or workmen could then, as now, have remedy for any dispute for defective work under the 5th Geo. 4, c. 95, s. 2, which empowers magistrates to settle by arbitration all disputes between masters and workmen, save the establishment of wages for work to be done.

The Bill does not interfere in the slightest degree with the manner in which work shall be made, nor does it necessitate the establishment of factories or the congregation of workmen into large towns; for, all the workmen seek is to be paid a certain sum as can be agreed upon per pair, subject to no stoppages, and if it is necessary, and they cannot obtain employment without renting a frame, or it may prove to be more economical to pay a person to convey their work to the manufacturer, they must do that, subject to the same condition as relates to debtor and creditor, and liable to the same penalties for the non-fulfilment, or breach of any contract.

The workmen do not think that this Bill will immediately benefit them, or raise their wages, but they believe it will be the sure means of gradually improving the class of workmen and the precursor of improved machinery and extended trade. That instead of creating machinery for the purpose of enabling a few middle-men to live out of the exorbitant charges they claim against the will of workmen, and the manufacturers dependent more upon the profit wrung from machinery than from the goods manufactured, it will eventually enable workmen to seek better means of obtaining a livelihood, and manufacturers to depend upon the skill, taste and ingenuity of the goods made, than the rent of frames.

That this measure is highly necessary is evidenced by the fact, that although frames may not be worth more than 4 *l.* each, they are charged at the rate of 2 *l.* 10 *s.* to 5 *l.* per year; and in a statement made by a Member of the present House of Commons, it was shown that 8,000 *l.* laid out in frames, returned in two years 800 *l.* as interest, and 1,950 *l.* profits, and this in addition to the exorbitant charges of middle-men. These frame charges in Leicestershire alone yearly exceed many thousand pounds the annual assessment of the poor-rates for that county.

In conclusion, we beg to insert one of the facts established by the Commissioner appointed to inquire into the grievances, and which required correction: he said, "The long recognised custom of heavy deductions, on one pretext or another, from the wages of the workpeople, which make it the interest of employers to spread any given amount of work among a larger number of workmen than is necessary to its performance; a practice that is further greatly facilitated by the superabundant amount of machinery which has been created, and brought into the trade, by others than the legitimate employers in it, as profitable investments of capital, induced by the customary exorbitant rent of frames."

SESSION 1854.

BILL to restrain Stoppages from Payment of Wages in the Hosiery Manufacture.

Objections of the Hosiers of Nottingham and its Neighbourhood.

1st. That the proposed Bill interferes uselessly with the ordinary mode of settling accounts between persons who must, from their position as employer and employed, necessarily be contracting parties, although it cannot affect the result to the workman, so as to improve his position, inasmuch as he cannot receive more than the value of his labour, according to the supply and demand for the time being.

 2d. That

ppendix, No. 5.

2d. That not only will the workman not be benefited, but the disadvantage and risk of loss which the employers will be subjected to, will add another element to the cost of manufacture; and as the price of the manufactured article is regulated to a great degree by competition with foreign producers, such additional cost will indirectly necessitate a reduction in wages.

3d. That the existing laws enforce the payment of wages in coin, without deduction, as stringently as is consistent with the development of the manufacturing resources of the country.

4th. That in the hosiery trade it has, for a century past, been the custom for the manufacturers to let their frames at well known and fixed rents, either directly to the men employed to work them, or to persons called middle-men, who make it their business to act as a medium of communication between the masters and workmen, engaging a number of frames and taking out valuable materials, the property of the hosiers, and sub-letting the frames to the persons employed to work up the materials into goods. It is absolutely necessary that middle-men should be employed, as there are great numbers now working stocking frames who are quite incapable of managing and keeping the frame in order; which duty now devolves on the middle-man. By this means the workmen are enabled to reside in the country, and wherever cheap living, low rents, or other attractions make it most convenient to them, and to carry on their work in the midst of their families, who are able, from early age, to render valuable assistance. At present, the workmen live scattered over the counties of Nottingham, Leicester and Derby; but the middle-men alone have to travel to the towns where the hosiers reside, for which they are compensated by a fixed scale of charges, regularly understood by the trade, which arrangement is highly advantageous to the workmen, inasmuch as it obviates the necessity of his taking one or more journeys weekly, which would involve a great loss of time and much individual hardship. Under this system, a trustworthy intelligent workman has the opportunity of raising himself in the world, by being put by his master into the position of a middle-man. Under this system, also, the manufacturer is in some degree compensated, in case the workman entrusted with the frame uses it to make goods for any other employer. If this Bill pass into a law, and be acted upon, it would virtually abolish frame rent, and the manufacturer would have to adopt a new mode of carrying on his trade, which must create considerable inconvenience and embarrassment, eventually to arrive at the same results.

5th. That it is an error to suppose that the abolition of frame rent would benefit the workman, or increase the real amount of his wages. It would only vary the mode in which the owner would receive an equivalent for the cost of the machine, and of keeping it in repair; and that would be done by adopting two scales of wages, one for workmen providing their own machines, and another for those whose machines were found by the master. For instance, if the price per dozen for the one were 4 *s.* 6 *d.*, it would perhaps be 4 *s.* for the other; the larger the quantity of goods produced, the greater would in effect be the amount of the rent thus paid; and, therefore, an industrious hard-working man would pay more than he does under the present system, the idle and improvident man would pay less. It is not the interest of the workmen to provide their own frames, and few have the ability to do so. It has been found from experience, that workmen owning frames seldom keep them in good repair; and, from being out of repair, the quality of their work is injured, and their wages consequently reduced. At the end of a few years these machines require an expenditure of several pounds to renew them; this the workmen cannot afford, and the consequence is, they are compelled to part with them at a great loss.

6th. That at the present time any such interference between master and workman in the hosiery trade is particularly uncalled for and undesirable, as a good understanding exists in all branches.

Lastly. That if the proposed Bill pass into a law, it will in all probability be entirely disregarded both by master and workmen, in the same manner as the Act of 8 & 9 Vict., c. 77, intituled, "An Act to make further regulations respecting the tickets of work to be delivered to persons employed in the manufacture of hosiery in certain cases," which, from the utterly impracticable nature of its provisions, became a dead letter within a month after it was passed, and has never since been acted upon in Nottingham or its neighbourhood.

Appendix, No. 6.

PAPERS delivered in by Mr. *Thomas Corah*, 22 May 1855.

Sir,

You request me to send you a statement of the earnings of the wrought-hose hands you employ through me. I send you a few quotations from my work-book of last week's work. I send you four classes of hands, as it will appear more plain, with the rent and carriage taken off, as it simply stands in my book.

I work to you 100 narrow frames; these hands are as follows:—

1st. 32 Men hands.

2d. 22 Stocking-makers' children.

3d. 30 Agricultural labourers' children.

4th. 16 Agricultural labourers' wives.

MEN HANDS, WITH THEIR WIVES.

James Gesson, 2 Frames, Himself and Wife.

9 May:	£.	s.	d.
2 doz., 6 pair, 4*s.* 6*d.*	–	11	3
2 doz., 3*s*, 6*d.*	–	7	–
	–	18	3
Carriage	–	–	9
	–	17	6
Rent	–	1	8
Paid £.	–	15	10

James Hincks Tapcote, 2 Frames, Himself and Wife.

12 May:	£.	s.	d.
2 doz., 4 pair, 4*s.* 6*d.*	–	10	6
1 doz., 3 pair, 4*s.* 9*d.*	–	5	11¼
	–	16	5¼
Carriage	–	–	8
	–	15	9¼
Rent	–	1	8
Paid £.	–	14	1¼

Appendix, No. 6.

MEN HANDS, WITH THEIR WIVES—*continued.*

Wm. Clarke, 2 Frames, Himself and Wife.

12 May:	£.	s.	d.
4 doz., 2 pair, 3*s.* 6*d.*	–	14	7
1 doz., 4 pair, 3*s.* 6*d.*	–	4	8
	–	19	3
Carriage	–	–	9½
	–	18	5½
Rent	–	1	8
Paid £.	–	16	9½

Joseph Clarke, 1 Frame.

11 May:	£.	s.	d.
3 doz., 4*s.* 6*d.*	–	13	6
Carriage	–	–	6½
	–	12	11½
Rent	–	–	10
Paid £.	–	12	1½

Joseph Moore, 4 Frames, Himself and Three Children.

8 May:	£.	s.	d.
10 doz., 1 pair, 3*s.* 6*d.*	1	15	3½
Carriage	–	1	5½
	1	13	10
4 Frames	–	3	4
Paid £.	1	10	6

Thomas Arnold, 5 Frames, Himself, Two Children, and Two Agricultural Labourers Children.

May 11:	£.	s.	d.
8 doz., 1, 3*s.* 6*d.*	1	8	3½
3 doz., 4 pairs, 4*s.* 3*d.*	–	14	2
	2	2	5½
Carriage	–	1	9
	2	–	8½
5 Frames	–	4	2
Paid £.	1	16	6½

MEN HANDS, WITH THEIR WIVES—*continued.*

Ann Smith, Agricultural Labourer's Daughter.

11 May:	£.	s.	d.
2 doz., 5 pair, 3*s.* 6*d.*	–	8	5½
Carriage	–	–	4
	–	8	1½
Rent	–	–	10
Paid £.	–	7	3½

Mary Ann Carter, Agricultural Labourer's Child.

6 May:	£.	s.	d.
2 doz., 3*s.* 6*d.*	–	7	–
Carriage	–	–	3½
	–	6	8½
Rent	–	–	10
Paid £.	–	5	10½

Charles Sanders, a Labourer's Son.

6 May:	£.	s.	d.
1 doz. 8, 3*s.* 6*d.*	–	5	10
Carriage	–	–	3
	–	5	7
Rent	–	–	10
Paid £.	–	4	9

EXAMPLES OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS.

Ann Hollis.

6 May:	£.	s.	d.
1 doz., 6 pair, 4*s.* 3*d.*	–	6	4½
Carriage	–	–	3
	–	6	1½
Rent	–	–	10
Paid £.	–	5	3½

Appendix, No. 6.

EXAMPLES OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS—*continued.*

Mary Cooper.

	£.	s.	d.
6 May:			
3 doz., 3*s.* 6*d.*	–	10	6
Carriage	–	–	5
	–	10	1
2 weeks' rent	–	1	8
Paid £.	–	8	5

These hands, except the agricultural labourers' children, have the frames at their own homes.

WIFE'S WAGES, FROM WORK-BOOK.

Susanna Norton.

	£.	s.	d.
11 May:			
2 doz., 4*s.* 3*d.*	–	8	6
Carriage	–	–	4
	–	8	2
Rent	–	–	10
Paid £.	–	7	4

Sarah Addison.

	£.	s.	d.
6 May:			
1 doz., 2, 4*s.* 9*d.*	–	5	6½
Carriage	–	–	2½
	–	5	4
Rent	–	–	10
Paid £.	–	4	6

You will see that I charge 2*d.* per frame less rent than you do at Leicester. I consider that I am quite as forward at 10*d.* as you at 1*s.*; they are more under my own eye than yours can be, and I know more of hands, whether they will take care of a frame or dirty it.

(signed) *Thos. Turner.*

First Time taking in.

1855:

		£.	s.	d.
8 March.	9 weeks	193	8	–
	Rent	21	1	–
		172	7	–
Winding for that time		7	17	6
		164	9	6
Doing up the work, taking it in, and standing for frames, &c.		10	15	–
	Remains £.	153	14	6

Second Time taking in.

		£.	s.	d.
19 April.	6 weeks	159	–	5
	Rent	17	17	–
		141	3	5
Winding for that time		7	10	–
		133	13	5
Doing up the work, taking it in, and standing for frames, &c.		9	9	–
	Remains £.	124	4	5

	£.	s.	d.
12 hands, one week	11	10	–
Rent, &c.	3	3	–
£.	8	7	–

The average wages when everything is taken off, from 14 *s.* to 15 *s.* per week.

When Mr. Collins adopted the net system, he reduced his workmen one-half.

N. Corah & Sons, Granby-street, Leicester.

Mrs. Spence Enderby; Mother, and three Daughters; uses 12 loaves of bread per week; it costs her 3 *s.* per week more in bread now than it used to do.

			s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
15	0	Women's diapers	3	–	2	5	–
		2 weeks' rent			–	8	–
				£.	1	17	–

Callis, of Markfield; Father, and his two Sons; the Sons young.

			s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
6	0	Men's blue ribs	6	–	1	16	–
		1 week's rent			–	3	–
				£.	1	13	–

Appendix, No. 6.

Boulton, of Ansty. The Father and Family.

			s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
16	0	Men's ribs, S. D.	3	–	2	8	–
11	0	„ wrought	6	–	3	6	–
					5	14	–
		4 frames, 2 weeks' rent (the double frame 2s. per week)			–	10	–
				£.	5	4	–

Riddle of Bartby. Family.

			s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
5	0	No. 2 socks	1	7	–	7	11
4	0	„ 3 „	1	9	–	7	–
9	0	„ 4 „	1	11	–	17	3
12	0	„ 6 „	2	3	1	7	–
16	0	„ 7 „	2	5	1	18	8
					4	17	10
		Rent			–	8	–
				£.	4	9	10

Mr. Spence Enderby.

			s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
38	0	– –	2	6	4	15	–
		6 frames	1	6 each	–	9	–
					4	6	–
		Worked by six men. (Expenses, carriage, standing, &c. &c.)			–	10	–
				£.	3	16	–

Augrave, Leicester:

			s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
44	0	women's	1	10	4	–	8
39	0	„	2	–	3	18	–
					7	18	8
		7 wide frames, 2/6 each			–	17	6
				£.	7	1	2

Smith, of Barkby; part of Family:

			s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
25	0	women's	2	1 5	1	15	5
12	0	„	4	1 9	1	1	–
3	0	„	6	2 1	–	6	3
					3	2	8
		Two frames, two weeks' rent			–	4	–
				£.	2	18	8

Rubn.

Rubn. Smith Barwell, near Hinckley; Father and his three Sons; the Wife seams. Appendix, No. 6.

	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1 0 women's	6	–		–	6	–
1 0 „	6	6		–	6	6
1 9 „	6	9		–	11	9¾
2 2 „	4	6		–	9	9
				1	14	–¾
			Rent	–	4	–
			£.	1	10	–¾

Thomas Moore Barwell, near Hinckley; Husband, Wife, and a Daughter; the Wife is lame and cannot do much; about 7*s.* is the average wages when the rent is taken off.

	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
2 0 women's	4	–		–	8	–
1 6 „	6	–		–	9	–
				–	17	–
			Rent	–	3	–
			£.	–	14	

John Parker, of Barwell, works about 80 frames to us; 22 are our own.

J. Handford, of Leicester:

	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
25 0 women's	2	9		3	8	9
15 0 „	3	6		2	12	6
2 0 „	3	9		–	7	6
				6	8	9
			12 frames, rent	–	12	–
			£.	5	16	9

	s.		s.	£.	£.	s.	d.
A. 1 0	4						
Rent	1						
	3	50	12	30	1	10	–

	s.		s.	£.	£.	s.	d.
B. 2 –	8						
Rent, 4*s.*	1						
	7	100	12	60	3	–	–

	s.	s.		s.	£.	£.	s.	d.
C. 3 –	4	12						
Rent	1							
	11	150	12	90	4	10	–	

Thomas Dayman's Shop, of Enderby; he has the care of the Shop, and attends to the Hands.

NAME.	Age.	Dozen.	Price.	To Receive when all Expenses are Paid.	Expenses.
			s. d. *s. d.*	£. *s. d.*	*s. d.*
Thomas Dayman - -	55	4	2 6 = 10 -	- 6 5½	3 6½
John Dayman - -	32	6	2 6 = 15 -	- 11 5½	3 6½
Joseph Dayman - -	31	6	2 6 = 15 -	- 11 5½	3 6½
William Dayman - -	24	6	2 6 = 15 -	- 11 5½	3 6½
Edward Dayman - -	22	6	2 6 = 15 -	- 11 5½	3 6½
James Dayman - -	16	5	2 6 = 12 6	- 8 11½	3 6½
George Southam - -	44	6	2 6 = 15 -	- 10 9½	3 6½
William Southam - -	16	5	2 6 = 12 6	- 8 11½	3 6½
George Southam, junr. -	14	4	2 6 = 10 -	- 6 5½	3 6½
Mary Southam - -	28	3	2 6 = 7 6	- 4 5½	3 6½
Eliza Spence - -	26	3	2 6 = 7 6	- 4 5½	3 6½
Henry Hudson - -	45	5	2 6 = 12 6	- 8 11½	3 6½
		When all expenses are paid - - £.		5 5 4	

	£. *s. d.*
Bread Consumed - - 4½ dozen - - - at 7*s.* 6*d.* - -	1 13 9
,, - - ,, - - - at 5*s.* -*d.* - -	1 2 6
	- 11 3

LEGGERS.

s.	*d.*	
1	6	rent.
-	3	standing.
-	6	carriage.
-	8	winding.
-	2½	for turning the hose.
-	5	for trouble per frame.
3	6½	

FOOTERS.

s	*d.*
3	-

Appendix, No. 7.

PAPERS delivered in by Mr. *Thomas Corah*, 25 May 1855.

STATEMENT showing the AVERAGE WAGES, with the Particulars thereof, in the Shops of *Joseph Handford* and *John Woodward*.

JOSEPH HANDFORD. 17 May 1855.

Stoppages are, for each Frame—Rent, 1 *s.*; Standing, 3 *d.*; Taking in, 3 *d.*; Winding, 6 *d.*

NAME.	Age.	Quantity.	PRICE.	*s.*	*d.*
	Years.				
Collins - -	63	3½ doz.	2 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz. -	9	7½
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				7	7½
			Seaming, 3½ *d.* per doz. -	1	–½
				6	7
am Everard -	60	2½ doz.	3 *s.* 6 *d.* per doz. -	8	9
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				6	9
			Seaming, 4 *d.* per doz. -	–	10
				5	11
h Grimley -	52	5½ doz.	2 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz. -	15	1½
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				13	1½
			Seaming, 3½ *d.* per doz. -	1	7
				11	6½
am Simpson -	64	2 8/12 doz.	3 *s.* 6 *d.* per doz. -	9	4
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				7	4
			Seaming, 4 *d.* per doz. -	–	10
				6	6
h Bindley -	26	4 doz.	2 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz. -	11	–
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				9	–
			Seaming, 3½ *d.* per doz. -	1	2
				7	10
am Sanders -	42	3½ doz.	2 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz. -	9	7
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				7	7
			Seaming, 3½ *d.* per doz. -	1	–
				6	7

JOHN WOODWARD, Lower Church Gate. 17 May 1855.

The Stoppages are, for each Frame—Rent, 1 *s.*; Standing, 3 *d.* Taking in, 3 *d.*; Winding, 6 *d.*

NAME.	Age.	Quantity.	PRICE.	*s.*	*d.*
	Years.				
William Hensworth	37	3½ doz.	3 *s.* per doz. - -	10	6
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				8	6
			Seaming, 4 *d.* per doz. -	1	2
				7	4
William Jennings -	–	6 doz.	3 *s.* per doz. - -	18	–
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				16	–
			Seaming, 4 *d.* per doz. -	2	–
				14	–
John Taylor - -	57	4½ doz.	3 *s.* per doz. - -	13	6
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				11	6
			Seaming, 4 *d.* per doz. -	1	6
				10	–
Thomas Newton -	45	3 doz.	2 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz. -	8	3
			Seaming, 3½ *d.* per doz. -	–	10½
				7	4½
William Fox -	24	3 doz.	3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz. -	11	3
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				9	3
			Seaming, 4 *d.* per doz. -	1	–
				8	3
William Bloxom -	42	4 doz.	2 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz. -	11	–
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				9	–
			Seaming, 3½ *d.* per doz. -	1	2
				7	10

(*continued*)

NAME.	Age.	Quantity.	PRICE.	s.	d.
	Years.				
Joseph Pepper -	45	3¼ doz.	3*s.* 6*d.* per doz.. -	11	4½
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				9	4½
			Seaming, 4*d.* per doz. -	1	1
				8	3½
James Whitmore -	54	3 doz. -	2*s.* 9*d.* per doz. -	8	3
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				6	3
			Seaming, 3½*d.* per doz. -	–	10½
				5	4½
Wm. England -	60	3 doz. -	2*s.* 9*d.* per doz. -	8	3
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				6	3
			Seaming, 3½*d.* per doz. -	–	10½
				5	4½
John Bolesworth -	17	3 doz. -	3*s.* 6*d.* per doz. -	10	6
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				8	6
			Seaming, 4*d.* per doz. -	1	–
				7	6
George Torvill -	21	3 doz. -	3*s.* 6*d.* per doz. -	10	6
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				8	6
			Seaming, 4*d.* per doz. -	1	–
				7	6

NAME.	Age.	Quantity.	PRICE.	s.	d.
	Years.				
Richard Baxter -	45	3 doz. -	3*s.* per doz. -	9	–
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				7	–
			Seaming, 4*d.* per doz. -	1	–
				6	–
Thomas Harris -	46	2½ doz.	3*s.* 9*d.* per doz. -	9	5
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				7	5
			Seaming, 4*d.* per doz. -	–	10
				6	7
Elizabeth Smith -	52	2½ doz.	3*s.* 9*d.* per doz. -	9	4½
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				7	4½
			Seaming, 4*d.* per doz. -	–	10
				6	6½
Elizabeth Taylor -	50	2½ doz.	2*s.* 9*d.* per doz. -	6	10½
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				4	10½
			Seaming, 3½*d.* per doz. -	–	8½
				4	2
Thomas Ward -	30	3½ doz.	3*s.* 9*d.* per doz. -	13	1½
			Stoppages - -	2	–
				11	1½
			Seaming, 4*d.* per doz. -	1	2
				9	11½

Handford - - - - -

s.	d.
6	7
5	11
11	6½
6	6
7	10
6	7
8	3½
5	4½
5	4½
7	6
7	6
11) 79	–
7	2 2/12

Woodward - - - - -

s.	d.
7	4
14	–
10	–
7	4½
8	3
7	10
6	–
6	7
6	6½
4	2
9	11½
11) 88	–½
8	–

These quantities, prices, &c. were got from the hands themselves, individually.

The average of Handford's hands is 7*s.* 2 2/12*d.* per week.

The average of Woodward's hands is 8*s.* per week.

Handford's hands are mostly old men.

STATEMENT showing the EARNINGS of SEVEN PERSONS, with the Amount of Stoppages. Appendix, No. 7

Mrs. HIND.

The Stoppages are—for Rent, 1 *s.*; Standing, 3 *d.*; Taking in, 3 *d.*; Winding and Wetting Yarn, 7 *d.*; TOTAL - - - 2 *s.* 1 *d.* each.

	Age.	Quantity.	Price.		
	Years.			*s.* *d.*	
Henry Palmer - -	35	$1\frac{10}{12}$ doz.	- 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz.	6 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	This man commences work at about 12 in the morning, and dines at a quarter past one; returns to work at about three, and stops from six o'clock till seven or eight; depends chiefly upon the length of the nights. His wife works in a factory.
			Stoppages -	2 1	
				4 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Seaming 4 *d.* per doz. -	- 7	
				4 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	
		doz. prs.			
Wm. Maine - -	60	3 8	- 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz.	13 9	
			Stoppages - -	2 1	
				11 8	
			Seaming - -	1 3	
				10 5	
Sarah Poddington -	50	$2\frac{2}{12}$ doz.	- 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz.	8 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Very lame, and goes with a crutch; her hands are very bad.
			Stoppages -	2 1	
				6 - $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Seaming - -	- 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	
				5 4	
John Brewin - -	67	$2\frac{1}{4}$ doz.	3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz.	8 5	
			Stoppages -	2 1	
				6 4	
			Seaming - -	- 9	
				5 7	
Wm. Ringrowes - -	40	$3\frac{1}{2}$ doz.	- 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz.	13 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Stoppages -	2 1	
				11 - $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Seaming - -	1 2	
				9 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Thos. Loomes - -	48	$3\frac{1}{2}$ doz.	- 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz.	13 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Stoppages -	2 1	
				11 - $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Seaming - -	1 2	
				9 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Saml. Maine - -	13	$2\frac{10}{12}$ doz.	- 3 *s.* 9 *d.* per doz.	10 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Stoppages -	2 1	
				8 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	
			Seaming - -	- 11	
				7 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	

£.	*s.*	*d.*	
-	4	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	Old men, women, and boys.
-	10	5	
-	5	4	
-	5	7	
-	9	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	
-	9	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	
-	7	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	
7)2	12	11	
-	7	7 each.	

Mr. Hind is 73 years old; he winds. Mrs. Hind is 63 years old; she attends to the shop. The sum they have weekly is 7 *s.* 7 *d.*, *i. e.* Mr. and Mrs. Hind.

They bring in 20 doz. weekly, at 3 *s.* 9. per dozen - - - £. 3 15 -

Rent - - - - - - 7 -

£. 3 8 -

The very great diversity in hands and frames, and their irregularity, will cause the impossibility of a net system.

STATEMENT showing the GROSS and NET EARNINGS of THIRTY-FOUR PERSONS at Mr. *Thomas Sutton*'s, for the Week ending 19th May 1855.

NAMES OF HANDS.	Gauge of Frame.	Width of Frame.	Days at Work charged for.	Gross Earnings.	Deduction for Frame Rent and Charges.	Deduction for Winding.	Deduction for Candles, Needles, and Firing.	Earnings, Net.	REMARKS.
				£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	
1. Brown - -	16	25	6	- 16 6	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 12 9	
2. Barrows - -	21	36	6	- 15 7	3 6	1 -	- 6	- 10 7	
3. Bateman - -	24	34	6	- 12 6	4 -	1 -	- 6	- 7 -	- - Three days neglect of time.
4. Lewin - -	21	48	6	1 4 0½	4 6	1 3	- 6	- 18 7½	
5. R. Weston -	22	48	6	1 - 7	4 6	1 3	- 6	- 14 4	
6. Brambly - -	16	16	6	- 9 8	1 6	- 6	- 6	- 7 2	Youth.
7. Gunton - -	16	44	6	1 6 6½	4 6	1 3	- 6	1 - 3½	
8. Anatt - -	21	36	6	- 14 11	4 -	1 -	- 6	- 9 5	Neglect, two days
9. Agar - -	21	36	6	- 18 3¼	4 -	1 -	- 6	- 12 9¼	
10. Springthorp -	13	25	6	1 1 4	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 17 7	Three-top frame.
11. C. Weston -	22	34	6	- 8 2½	4 -	1 -	- 6	- 2 8½	- - Four days neglect.
12. Leoverage -	16	34	6	- 17 5½	4 -	1 -	- 6	- 11 11½	
13. Pope - -	16	51	6	1 2 11	4 9	1 6	- 6	- 16 2	- - Two days neglected.
14. Cocking - -	24	48	6	- 14 6	4 6	1 3	- 6	- 8 3	Slow hand.
15. Grober - -	24	36	6	1 - 11¼	4 -	1 -	- 6	- 15 5¼	
16. Macarte - -	16	49	6	1 2 11	4 9	1 3	- 6	- 16 5	
17. N. Freer - -	18	25	6	- 15 6¼	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 11 9¼	
18. Kirk - -	16	49	6	1 9 -½	4 9	1 3	- 6	1 2 6½	
19. Boswell - -	21	42	6	1 1 8	4 6	1 3	- 6	- 15 5	
20. Brown - -	21	48	12	1 6 9	9 -	2 6	- 6	- 14 3	- - Neglected the whole week before; had to pay double.
21. Noon - -	16	16	6	- 11 6½	1 6	- 6	- 6	- 9 -½	
22. Night - -	21	51	6	1 1 1½	4 9	1 6	- 6	- 14 4½	Neglect, one day.
23. Nicholls - -	16	23	6	- 13 2	2 2	- 9	- 6	- 9 11	Aged man.
24. Goodman -	16	44	6	- 16 4	4 6	1 3	- 6	- 10 11	- - Neglected, two days.
25. Brambly - -	13	25	6	- 12 1	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 8 4	Away two days.
26. Mrs. Guntor -	21	16	6	- 6 5	1 9	- 6	- -	- 4 2	- - Aged female, frame at home.
27. Ison - -	16	25	6	- 19 10	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 16 1	
28. Clarke - -	11	25	6	- 16 -	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 12 3	
29. Fillet - -	21	34	6	- 16 11¾	3 6	1 -	- 6	- 11 11¾	
30. Brown - -	16	25	6	- 16 2	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 12 5	
31. Rider - -	21	34	6	- 19 5½	3 6	1 -	- 6	- 14 5½	
32. Holt - -	16	44	6	- 18 10½	4 6	1 3	- 6	- 12 7½	- - Neglected one day.
33. Kells - -	16	24	6	- 17 9	2 4	- 9	- 6	- 14 4	Youth.
34. Sutton - -	16	25	6	- 19 10½	2 6	- 9	- 6	- 16 1½	

The above list varies from 1 *s.* to 3 *s.* 6 *d.* per week for frame rent; it belongs to manufacturers. The first head headed deduction and charges, after the frame-rents are deducted off, is a remuneration for the manager's time of fetching work, serving hands, taking in, wear and tear of bobbings, weels, swifts, and many more requisites, in addition to all responsibility connected with his station.

EXPENSES of Five Frames during a Period of 15 Years, with the Amounts of Frame Rents.

	£. s. d.		£. s. d.
Five frames, new insides, 7 *l.* 10 *s.* each	37 10 –	1st year, 50 weeks' rent, 1 *s.* per week each	12 10 –
Expenses, such as new screws, mainsprings, sinkers, &c., jobs and repairs	1 – –	2d „ „ „ „ „	12 10 –
		3d „ „ „ „ „	12 10 –
Moulding and sinkers, &c. &c., 3 *l.* 5 *s.* each	16 5 –	4th „ 45 „ „ „	11 5 –
Biggs says, 4 *l.* 10.			
Cleaning, jobs, removals, and other expenses	3 15 –	5th „ 50 „ „ „	12 10 –
		6th „ „ „ „ „	12 10 –
Moulding and sinkers, jobs and repairs	16 5 –	7th „ 45 „ „ „	11 5 –
Cleaning, jobs, removals, and other expenses, &c.	3 15 –	8th „ 50 „ „ „	12 10 –
		9th „ „ „ „ „	12 10 –
Moulding and sinkers, &c.	16 5 –	10th „ 45 „ „ „	11 5 –
Cleaning, jobs, removals, and other expenses, &c.	3 15 –	11th „ 50 „ „ „	12 10 –
		12th „ „ „ „ „	12 10 –
Moulding and sinkers	16 5 –	13th „ 45 „ „ „	11 5 –
Cleaning, jobs, removals, and other expenses	3 15 –	14th „ 50 „ „ „	12 10 –
		15th „ „ „ „ „	12 10 –
Still during the 15 years, at least one year each, for five frames	12 10 –	Value of the old carcases at end of 15 years, 35 *s.* each	8 15 –
Balance	60 5 –		
£.	191 5 –	£.	191 5 –

Mr. Walker stated last Tuesday, 3 ½ years, which is longer than they would go.
Leaving a profit to the manufacturer of 60 *l.* 5 *s.* for the five frames during 15 years, being 4 *l.* per frame for that time, or 16 *s.* per annum; is, 10 per cent. upon the capital invested.
Many frames require moulding at the expiration of two years, some even less. We have now three frames in the hands of one framesmith that e only gone two years, and are now being moulded.
f a frame is still a few months it will require cleaning previous to its being got to work, at the expense of from 10 *s.* to 20 *s.*

EXPENSES of Repairing Frames of different Gauge.

	New Inside.	Moulded.	Cleaning.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
15 inch	5 5 –	2 2 –	
Sinker	– 17 –	– 17 –	
	6 2 –	2 19 –	
16 inch	5 12 –	2 4 8	
Sinker	– 18 3	– 18 3	
	6 10 3	3 2 11	
17 inch	5 19 –	2 7 5	
Sinker	– 19 6	– 19 6	
	6 18 6	3 6 –	
18 inch	6 6 –	2 10 3	
Sinker	1 – 9	1 – 9	
	7 6 9	3 11 –	
20 inch	7 – –	2 15 10	From 10 *s.* to 20 *s.*, or 30 *s.*; with jobs, rise in proportion.
Sinker	1 3 3	1 3 3	
	8 3 3	3 19 1	
25 inch	8 15 –	3 9 9	
Sinker	1 9 6	1 9 6	
	10 4	4 19 3	
30 inch	10 10 –	4 3 9	
Sinker	1 13 9	1 13 9	
	12 3 9	5 17 6	
35 inch	12 5 –	4 17 8	
40 „	14 – –	5 11 8	
45 „	15 15 –	6 5 7	
50 „	17 10 –	6 19 7	
55 „	19 5 –	7 13 6	
60 „	21 – –	8 7 6	

COST OF FRAMES.

997 ribd. cost 8 *l.*, 1855; mills, 1 *s.*
998 „ „ „ 1 *s.*
999 „ „ „ 1 *s.*
1,000 „ „ „ 1 *s.*
1,001 23 G., 13 *l.* 10 *s.* „ 1 *s.* 6 *d.*
985, 986, 987 — 17 G. 25 inch wide, 17 *l.* each; 2 *s.* rent.
978, 979, 980, 981 — 16-15, 7 *l.*; cart, 1 *s.* each.
926, 927 — 15 inch ribd., 9 *l.* „ 1 *s.*

These prices for new insides do not include sinkers, repairs of woodwork, new bars, trucks (carriers, which for a 15-inch frame is 11 *s.* and pwards), sinking tackle, &c.
These prices for moulding do not include sinkers, needles, repairs of woodwork, new odd jacks, new screws, jack or sinker-moulds, trucks, or ny extra work.

ppendix, No. 7.

STATEMENT showing the difference between the NEW and OLD SYSTEM.

COLLEGE FACTORY.

	£.	s.	d.	
New System:				
80 dozen per week, at 3 ½ d. per dozen (1 frame's work)	1	3	4	
Needles, say 2 s., carting 6 d. - - -	–	2	6	
	1	–	10	
Seaming, 3 d. - - - - -	1	–	–	
Cutting out, say - - - -	–	1	2	
(22 gauges, say) - - - - - - -	2	2	–	22 gauge straight-downs, &c.
Old System:				
80 dozen per week, at 2 s. 1 d. per dozen (6 frames) -	8	6	8	
Saving under the new system upon 80 dozen - £.	6	4	8	
New System:				
180 dozen per week (14 gauge), at 1 ½ d. per dozen (1 frame's work) - - - - - - - -	1	2	6	
Needles, say 2 s., carting 6 d. - - -	–	2	6	
Seaming, 2 ½ d. per dozen - -	1	17	6	
Cutting out, say - - - -	–	2	–	
	3	4	6	20 gauge straight downs, &c.
Old System:				
180 dozen per week, at 1 s. 7 d. per dozen (9 frames)	14	5	–	
Saving under new system - - - £.	11	–	6	
New System Fashed:				
50 dozen per week (90 leds), at 1 s. 10 d. per dozen (4frames) - - - - - - - - - -	4	11	8	
Old System:				
50 dozen per week, at 3 s. 9 d. per dozen (17 frames)	9	7	6	Fashed hose.
Saving under new system - - - £.	4	15	10	
New System:				
45 dozen shirts per week, at 2 s. 3 d. per dozen (3 frames) - - - - - - - - - -	5	1	3	
Old System:				Shirts.
45 dozen per week, at 5 s. per dozen (11 frames) -	11	5	–	
Saving under new system - - - £.	6	4	3	

THE HOSIERY TRADE AT CHEMNITZ (CENTRAL OF SAXONY).

Large factories are established, making circular hose, work by steam power, where the foreman receives his 10 s. pr week, and the females from 1 s. 6 d. to 2 s. per week; they have steam-presses and steam-ironers to get up the goods much superior to our own. The best wrought hands get 4 s. per week out of the factory.

£. 2 with them will go as far as 5 l. with us. They send a large supply of their hosiery to this market; but the greatest bulk go to the American market, where they come into competition with our own.

Appendix, No. 8.

PAPERS delivered in by *John Sketchley*, 25 May 1855.

PROFIT on One Hundred Frames in 20 Years.

Rent, One shilling.

Number of Frames - - - - - - - - 100.

	£.	s.	d.
Average value per frame, 4 *l.*; total value - - - - - - - - - -	400	–	–
Interest at 5 per cent. per annum - - - - - - - - - -	20	–	–
Cost of repairs, at 14 *s.* each per year - - - - - - - - - -	70	–	–
Rent, at 1 *s.* per week each, for 48 weeks per year - - - - - - - -	240	–	–
Multiply the above by 20, and it stands as follows:			
Average value per frame, 4 *l.* each; total value - - - - - - - - -	400	–	–
Interest at 5 per cent., for 20 years - - - - - - - - - -	400	–	–
Cost of repairs, 14 *s.* per year, for 20 years - - - - - - - - -	1,400	–	–
Total Interest and Cost of Repairs in 20 years - - -	1,800	–	–
Rent, at 1 *s.* per week each, at 48 weeks per year, for 20 years - - - - -	4,800	–	–
Deduct for interest and cost of repairs - - - - - - - - - -	1,800	–	–
Left clear in 20 years, besides paying 5 per cent. interest, and keeping the 100 frames in good repair, and leaving them very nearly as good at the end of the 20 years as they would be at the beginning, the enormous sum of - - - - - - - - £.	3,000	–	–

STATEMENT of the Average Gross Earnings, with the Customary Deductions, of the following Persons belonging to the Common Wrought Hose Branch, in April 1855, at *Hinckley*.—Common 21 gauge.

Name of Workman.	Name of Master of Shop.	Name of Employer.	Number of Dozen per Week.	Amount per Dozen.	Total Gross Earnings.	Rent.	Charges and other Expenses	Total Deductions.	Net Earnings.	Number of Hours per Week.	Age.
				s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*		
omas Martin -	Thomas Smith -	Mr. Murcot -	2 doz. - -	4 –	8 –	1 –	1 9	2 9	5 3	74	20
omas Smith -	- - -	„ Mrucot -	2 doz. - -	4 6	9 –	1 –	1 9	2 9	6 3	76	33
omas Hawkins	- - -	„ Jeaks -	2 doz. and 10 prs.	3 6	9 11	1 –	1 10½	2 10½	7 –½	82	36
nn Southam -	- - -	„ Abel - -	1 doz. and 2 prs.	4 6	5 3	1 –	– 11½	1 11½	3 3½	70	72
Farmer - -	John Southam -	„ Abel - -	2 doz. - -	4 6	9 –	1 –	1 8	2 8	6 4	72	29
omas Clifford -	- - -	„ Woodcock	1 doz. and 9 prs.	4 –	7 –	1 –	1 –	2 –	5 –	72	54
muel Smith -	John Merrick -	„ Sills - -	Half hose: 2 doz. and 6 prs.	3 4	8 4	1 –	1 10	2 10	5 6	74	44
lliam Newcomb	Thomas Newcomb	„ Payne -	2 doz. and 4 prs.	3 6	8 2	1 –	1 7	2 7	5 7	78	32
nn Crofts -	Benjamin Crofts	„ Murcot -	2 doz. and 4 prs.	3 9	8 9	1 –	1 9½	2 9½	5 11½	68	50
rk Foxon -	- - -	„ Woodcock	1 doz. and 4 prs.	4 –	5 4	1 –	1 2	2 2	3 2	70	68
omas Newcomb	- - -	„ Payne -	1 doz. and 2 prs.	3 6	4 1	1 –	1 –	2 –	2 1	82	66
arles Clarke -	Benjamin Crofts	„ Murcot -	1 doz. and 4 prs.	4 –	5 4	1 –	1 4	2 4	3 –	70	13
omas Sketchley	Wm. Sketchley	„ Murcot -	1 doz. and 2 prs.	3 3	3 9½	1 –	1 –	2 –	1 9½	60	13
zabeth Ragg -	Wm. Sketchley	„ Murcot -	1 doz. and 6 prs.	3 6	5 3	1 –	1 5	2 5	2 10	64	46
zabeth Freer -	James Freer -	„ Smith -	1 doz. and 5 prs.	3 3	4 9¼	1 3	1 2	2 5	2 2¼	60	18

STATEMENT of the Cost, with the Cost of the after Repairs, of a Common Wrought-Hose Frame for 30 Years till it becomes a Carcase.

Twenty-one Gauge; Rent, 1 *s.* per week.

A Common Wrought-Hose Frame will stand four Moulds, on an average of six years apart.

	£.	s.	d.
First cost of a common wrought-hose frame	10	–	–
Interest on 10 *l.* for six years, at 5 per cent.	3	–	–
For losses in rent in six years	1	–	–
Incidental expenses for six years	–	15	–
Total for the first six years £.	14	15	–
Rent for first six years, at 2 *l.* 12 *s.* a year	15	12	–
Deduct for cost and of repairs	14	15	–
Left clear	–	17	–
Deduct for first mould	3	–	–
Deduct	–	17	–
Left	2	3	–
For losses in rent	1	–	–
Incidental expenses	–	15	–
Interest on 2 *l.* 3 *s.* for six years, at 5 per cent.	–	12	10
	4	10	10
Rent for second six years	15	12	–
Deduct	4	10	10
Left	11	1	2
Deduct for second mould	3	–	–
Left	8	1	2
For losses in rent	1	–	–
Incidental expenses	–	15	–
Total Expenses £.	1	15	–
Rent for third six years	15	12	–
Deduct	1	15	–
Left	13	17	–
Brought forward	13	17	–
Carried forward	8	1	2
Left clear	21	18	2
Deduct for third mould	3	–	–
Left	18	18	2
For losses in rent	1	–	–
Incidental expenses	–	15	–
	1	15	–
Rent for fourth six years	15	12	–
Deduct	1	15	–
Left	13	17	–
Carried forward	18	18	2
Left clear	32	15	2
Deduct for fourth mould	3	–	–
Left	29	15	2
For losses in rent	1	–	–
Incidental expenses	–	15	–
Total Expenses £.	1	15	–
Rent for last six years	15	12	–
Deduct	1	15	–
Left	13	17	–
Carried forward	29	15	2
Left clear	43	12	2
Average value of carcase	1	10	–
Total left clear at the end of 30 years for a common one-hose frame £.	45	2	2

STATEMENT of the Gross Earnings of Eight Hands belonging to the Common Wrought Hose Branch, and the Deductions therefrom, 12th April 1855. *Burbage.*

Name of Workman.	Name of Master of Shop.	Name of Employer.	Number of Dozen per Week.	Price per Dozen.	Gross Earnings.	Rent.	Other Expenses.	Total Deductions.	Net Earnings.	Hours per Week.	Number of Hose at Once.	Age.
				s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.			
Wm. Watts	– – –	Mr. Foxon	2 doz. and 3 prs.	3 6	7 10½	1 –	1 5	2 5	5 5½	74	1	41
John Watts, sen.	– – –	„ Payne	1 doz. and 2 prs.	4 6	5 3	1 –	1 2	2 2	3 1	72	1	67
John Watts	John Watts, sen.	„ Payne	1 doz. and 10 prs. Half hose.	4 6	8 3	1 –	1 7½	2 7½	5 7½	70	1	33
John Hopkins	– – –	„ Sills	2 doz. – –	3 3	6 6	1 –	1 3	2 3	4 3	72	1	42
Wm. West	John Kenney	„ Payne	1 doz. and 6 prs.	4 –	6 –	1 –	1 9	2 7	3 5	70	1	17
Isaac Orton	– – –	„ Abel	1 doz. and 6 prs.	4 6	6 9	1 –	1 3	2 3	4 6	76	1	49
Mrs. Orton	– – –	„ Abel	8 prs. – –	4 6	3 –	1 –	– 10	1 10	1 2	64	1	51
Elizabeth Garner	– – –	„ Foxon	1 doz. and 6 prs.	3 6	5 3	1 –	1 3	2 3	3 –	68	1	40

Appendix, No. 9.

Appendix, No. 9.

PAPER delivered in by *John Ginns*, 25 May 1855.

STATEMENT of the First Cost and the Cost of the after Repairs of a Common Two-Hose Frame for 20 Years, till it becomes a Carcase.

A Two-Hose Frame will take four Moulds, on an average of four years apart.
Twenty-one Gauge; Rent, 2 *s.* per week.

	£.	s.	d.
First cost of a 2-hose frame	14	–	–
Interest on 14 *l.* for four years, at 5 per cent.	2	16	–
For losses in rent	1	10	–
Incidental expenses for four years till first mould	–	12	–
Total Cost and Expenses £.	18	18	–
Rent for four years, at 5 *l.* 4 *s.* per year	20	16	–
Deduct	18	18	–
Left clear	1	18	–
Cost of first mould	5	4	–
Deduct	1	18	–
Left	3	6	–
Interest on 3 *l.* 6 *s.* for four years, at 5 per cent.	–	13	3
For losses in rent	1	10	–
Incidental expenses for four years	–	12	–
Total Expenses £.	6	1	3
Rent for second four years, at 5 *l.* 4 *s.* per year	20	16	–
Deduct	6	1	3
Left clear	14	14	9
Deduct for second mould	5	4	–
Left	9	10	9
For losses in rent	1	10	–
Incidental expenses	–	12	–
	2	2	–

	£.	s.	d.
Rent third four years, at 5 *l.* 4 *s.* per year	20	16	–
Deduct	2	2	–
Left clear	18	14	–
Carried forward	9	10	9
Total left clear at the end of third period £.	28	4	9
Deduct for third mould	5	4	–
Left	23	–	9
For losses in rent	1	10	–
Incidental expenses	–	12	–
Total Expenses £.	2	2	–
Rent for four years, at 5 *l.* 4 *s.* per year	20	16	–
Deduct for expenses	2	2	–
Left	18	14	–
Carried forward	23	–	9
Left clear	41	14	9
Deduct for fourth mould	5	4	–
Left	36	10	9
For losses in rent	1	10	–
Incidental expenses	–	12	–
Total Expenses £.	2	2	–
Rent for four years, at 5 *l.* 4 *s.* per year	20	16	–
Deduct for expenses	2	2	–
Left clear	18	14	–
Carried forward	36	10	9
Total £.	55	4	9
Average value of carcase	2	–	–
Carried forward	55	4	9
Total left clear at the end of 20 years £.	57	4	9

Appendix, No. 10.

Appendix, No. 10.

PAPER delivered in by Mr. *C. Billson*, 5 June 1855.

(A.)

EARNINGS of HANDS for Three Weeks, engaged on Fancy Socks, Plain Socks, and Sock Feet, in the Factory of Mr. *C. Billson*.

	1854: 2 September.	1854: 9 September.	1854: September 16.	TOTAL.
FANCY SOCK BRANCH:	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Bent, F.	1 15 11	1 5 2	1 18 4½	4 19 5½
Walker, S.	1 – 9	1 4 9	1 5 6	3 11 –
Cauley, Hy.	1 – 2	1 1 –	– 19 10	3 – –
Margeson	1 1 7	1 – 4	– 17 4½	2 19 3½
Smith, F.	1 – 8½	1 2 1½	1 4 10	3 7 8
Wicks, Thomas	1 8 10	– 19 8	1 1 6	4 10 –
Smith, N.	1 11 2	1 9 3	1 10 9	4 11 2
Wakeling, John	1 7 8	1 5 1	1 7 3	4 – –
Bent, John	1 6 2	1 4 –	1 4 5½	3 14 7½
Jones, M.	1 8 9	1 9 3	1 2 5½	4 – 5½
Ellington	1 – 3	1 1 5	1 1 4	3 3 –
PLAIN SOCKS:				
Davis, John	– 15 2	– 17 8½	1 – 6	2 13 4½
Ward, James	– 18 6	– 19 –	– 19 9½	2 17 3½
Freeman, William	– 19 6	1 3 10½	– 17 3½	3 – 8
Barnacle, E.	1 5 4	1 3 2	1 9 11	3 18 5
Berridge	– 19 –	– 18 8	1 2 6½	3 – 2½
SOCK FEET:				
Toone, Thomas	1 1 –½	1 8 10	– 17 –½	3 6 11
Reddall, William	– 17 3½	– 18 2	1 – 8	3 4 1½
Reddall, John	– 17 6½	1 2 1	1 1 8	3 1 3½
Woodcock, Sarah	– 14 9½	– 14 –½	– 9 3½	1 18 1½
Forehead, Mary	– 11 1	– 9 9	– 12 –½	1 12 10½

(B.)

EARNINGS of HANDS for Five Weeks, engaged on Fancy Hosiery, in the Factory of Mr. *C. Billson*.

	1854: 2 Sept.	1854: 9 Sept.	1854: 16 Sept.	1854: 7 Oct.	1854: 14 Oct.	TOTAL.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Greasley, John	1 15 –	1 13 1	1 15 4	1 15 10	1 14 2½	8 13 5½
Brookhouse	1 12 4	1 10 8	1 14 10	1 6 2	1 4 10	7 8 10
Kirk	2 4 11	1 10 10	2 7 –	1 6 –	1 14 10	9 3 7
Bird	1 14 7	1 16 2	1 10 4	1 4 7	1 14 2	7 19 10
Greasley, jun.	1 8 –	1 17 –	1 8 3	1 10 6	1 13 7	7 17 4
Greasley, sen.	1 5 3	– 13 5	1 9 6	– 19 4	1 5 10	5 13 4
Dann, John	1 14 11	– –	3 6 8	– –	3 1 5	8 2 11
Sansom	1 8 6	1 7 10½	1 12 4	1 1 6½	1 12 2	7 2 5
Greasley, William	1 15 10	1 9 2	1 10 4	1 1 7	1 4 6	7 1 5
Davis, A.	1 3 10	1 6 2	1 15 4	1 14 –	2 2 10	8 2 2
Fewkes, Edward	1 12 5	1 13 10	1 13 11	1 14 6	1 13 7	8 7 5
Tomkins	1 9 6½	2 – 2	2 6 10	1 7 6	1 9 1	8 13 1½
Smith, Thomas	1 5 11½	1 11 6	1 14 4	1 6 6	1 13 1½	7 11 5
Lewitt, John	1 18 7	1 14 2	2 7 4½	2 3 6½	2 2 8½	10 6 4½
Simmonds	1 1 11½	– –	2 3 11	not at work	1 6 1½	4 12 –
Haynes, John	1 14 1	1 17 11½	1 14 2	1 8 –	1 5 4½	7 19 7
Bell	– 18 6	1 7 11	1 12 7½	1 2 4	1 4 –	6 5 4½
Arnold, William	1 5 2	1 3 1	1 2 6	1 9 6	1 2 1	6 2 4
Blount	1 3 6	1 1 10	1 3 –	1 2 4	– 13 6	5 4 2
Grant, John	– 12 6	1 3 4	1 4 4	– 18 8	– 15 –	4 13 10

Appendix, No. 11.

PAPER delivered in by Mr. *G. Loveday*, 5 June 1855.

(C.)

ARNINGS of PERSONS employed in the Shop of Mr. *G. Loveday*, at *Wigston*, with the Deductions for Rent, and other Charges.

John Mould, a Single Man, 21 years of age:

	£. s. d.	
arnings - - -	1 – –	Plain Shirts.
	s. d.	
t - - -	2 6	
rges - -	1 –	
	– 3 6	
£.	– 16 6	

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
nch frame, cost 35 *l.*; rent, 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per for 50 weeks, would be for three years -		18 15 –
	£. s. d.	
. a year, casualties - -	1 10 –	
moulding at the end of three ears - - - - - -	8 – –	
ould deteriorate in three years	5 – –	
	14 10 –	
£.	4 5 –	

John Cawthorn, a Single Man, 17 years of age:

	£. s. d.	
arnings - - -	– 17 –	Plain shirts.
	s. d.	
nt - - -	2 6	
arges - -	1 –	
	– 3 6	
£.	– 13 6	

W. Cawthorn, a Married Man, 39 years of age:

	£. s. d.	
arnings - - -	1 2 6	Plain shirts.
	s. d.	
nt - - -	2 6	
arges - -	1 –	
	– 3 6	
£.	– 19 –	

John Walker, a Married Man, 32 years of age:

Seaming done at Home:	£. s. d.	
Full earnings - - -	– 19 4	Ribbed hose.
	s. d.	
Rent - - -	1 3	
Charges - -	– 6	
	– 1 9	
£.	– 17 7	

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
This frame would cost, when new, at three years and a half - - - - - - -		15 – –
	£. s. d.	
In casualties would cost - -	– 10 –	
Cost in moulding - - -	4 – –	
At the end of that time would deteriorate - - - -	2 – –	
		6 10 –
£.		8 10 –

	£. s. d.	
Would pay in rent - - -	8 5 –	
Expenses - - - -	6 10 –	
£.	1 15 –	

Ed. Stanyan, Married Man, 66 years of age:

Seaming done at Home:	£. s. d.	
Full earnings - - -	– 18 –	Ribbed shirts.
	s. d.	
Rent - - -	2 –	
Charges - -	– 6	
	– 2 6	
£.	– 15 6	

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
This frame would cost 20 *l.*; would go three years, rent 2 *s.* per week, for 50 weeks in the year - - - - - - - - -		15 – –
	£. s. d.	
Casualties - - - -	1 – –	
Moulding - - - -	4 10 –	
Deteriorated - - - -	3 – –	
		8 10 –
£.		6 10 –

Thomas Phipps, Married Man, 25 years of age.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	5	–	Plain shirts.
Rent	2	6				
Charges	1	–				
			–	3	6	
		£.	1	1	6	

William Wheale, Married Man, 39 years of age.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	3	6	Plain shirts.
Rent	2	6				
Charges	1	–				
			–	3	6	
		£.	1	–	–	

Isaac Langham, Married Man, 25 years of age.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	1	10	Ribbed hose.
Rent	2	3				
Charges	–	9				
			–	3	–	
		£.	–	18	10	

T. Boulter; Married; Works three Frames; his Wife and Lad.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			2	6	2	Plain shirts; worked to me 18 years.
Rent	4	–				
Charges	1	3				
			–	5	3	
		£.	2	–	11	

William Humberston, 35 years of age; Himself and Wife.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	13	–	Ribbed hose.
Rent	3	–				
Charges	1	–				
			–	4	–	
		£.	1	9	–	

John Stanyan, Age 40; and Boy, Age 13.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	4	–	Ribbed hose.
Rent	2	6				
Charges	1	–				
			–	3	6	
		£.	1	–	6	

William Stanyan, Age 33, and Wife.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	8	–	Plain shirts and hose.
Rent	3	3				
Charges	1	3				
			–	4	6	
		£.	1	3	6	

William Whyatt and Boy.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	4	11	Ribbed hose.
Rent	2	6				
Charges	1	–				
			–	3	6	
		£.	1	1	5	

William Harding; Age 58.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			1	1	–	Ribbed shirt (seaming do at Home).
Rent	2	–				
Charges	–	9				
			–	2	9	
		£.	–	18	3	

William Evatt; Married Man.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			–	18	–	Cuffs and mitts.
Rent	1	–				
Charges	–	6				
			–	1	6	
		£.	–	16	6	

William Harrison; Himself and Two Children.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			2	12	6	Ribbed hose.
Rent	4	–				
Charges	1	6				
			–	5	6	
		£.	2	7	–	

Ann York; a Married Woman; Labourer's Wife; Age 3

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			–	6	9	Plain hose.
Rent	–	8				
Charges	–	4				
			–	1	–	
		£.	–	5	9	

Ann Cheiney; a Married Woman; Stocking-maker; Wife with Family.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			–	6	9½	Sleeving shirts.
Rent	1	–				
Charges	–	4				
			–	1	4	
		£.	–	5	5½	

Alice Grant; Single Woman.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings			–	8	1	Footing hose.
Rent	1	–				
Charges	–	4				
			–	1	4	
		£.	–	6	9	

Mary Cawthorn; Single Woman.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ll earnings - - -			–	7	10	Sleeving shirts.
Rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	4				
			–	1	4	
£.			–	6	6	

Elizabeth Mould; a Girl; Age 16.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ll earnings - - -			–	7	10½	Footing hose.
Rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	4				
			–	1	4	
£.			–	6	6½	

Thomas Whyatt; a Youth.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ll earnings - - -			–	10	11	Making ribbed hose.
Rent - -	1	3				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	9	
£.			–	9	2	

William Ross; a Youth.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ll earnings - - -			–	13	–	Making ribbed hose.
Rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	6	
£.			–	11	6	

Samuel Mould; a Youth.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	9	–	Making tops.
Rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	6	
£.			–	7	6	

William Gamble; an old Man.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	4	9	Plain hose.
Rent - -	–	8				
Charges - -	–	4				
			–	1	–	
£.			–	3	9	

George Herbert, senior; Married Man; Age 48.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	15	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 21 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
£.			–	12	6	

Thomas Elliot; Married Man; Age 26.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	12	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 18 in.; rent - -	1	6				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	–	
£.			–	10	–	

James Herbert; Married Man; Age 42.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			1	–	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 34 in.; rent - -	2	6				
Charges - -	1	–				
			–	3	6	
£.			–	16	6	

Benjamin White; Single Man; Age 26.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			1	5	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 38 in.; rent - -	2	6				
Charges - -	1	–				
			–	3	6	
£.			1	1	6	

Isaac Harrison; Married Man; Age 39.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	15	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 22 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
£.			–	12	6	

Edward Stanyon; Married Man; Age 34.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			1	–	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 22 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
£.			–	17	6	

Thomas Goodman; Married Man; Age 50.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	14	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 17 in.; rent - -	1	6				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	–	
£.			–	12	–	

George Herbert, Jun.; Married Man; Age 21.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			1	–	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 24 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
			£. –	17	6	

Samuel Humberston; Single Man; Age 21.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	18	–	Knit hose.
Rib frame, 24 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
			£. –	15	6	

James White; Single Man; Age 28.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	15	–	Knit hose.
Rib frame, 22 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
			£. –	12	6	

Charles White; Married Man; Age 32.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	19	–	R. R. shirts.
Rib frame, 22 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
			£. –	16	6	

John Humberston; Married Man; Age 42.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	19	–	Knit hose.
Rib frame, 22 in.; rent - -	2	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	2	6	
			£. –	16	6	

Thomas Cleaver; Married Man; Age 50.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	13	–	Knit hose.
Rib frame, 16 in.; rent - -	1	3				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	9	
			£. –	11	3	

Ann Herbert; Single; Age 21.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	12	–	Knit hose.
Rib frame, 16 in.; rent - -	1	3				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	9	
			£. –	10	3	

George Harrison, Single; Age 14.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	9	6	Knit hose.
Rib frame, 16 in.; rent - -	1	3				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	9	
			–	7	9	

George Langham, Single; Age 35.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			1	–	–	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 34 in.; rent - -	2	6				
Charges - -	1	–				
			–	3	6	
			–	16	6	

William Boulter, Married; Age 37.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			1	4	–	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 36 in.; rent - -	2	6				
Charges - -	1	–				
			–	3	6	
			£. 1	–	6	

William Mould, Married; Age 23.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			1	–	–	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 36 in.; rent - -	2	6				
Charges - -	1	–				
			–	3	6	
			£. –	16	6	

Samuel Hill, Single; Age 19.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	16	–	Footer of knit hose.
Plain frame, 23 in.; rent - -	1	6				
Charges - -	–	8				
			–	2	2	
			£. –	13	10	

Sarah A. Harrison, Single; Age 16.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	7	–	Footer of knit hose.
Plain frame, 16 in.; rent - -	–	8				
Charges - -	–	4				
			–	1	–	
£.			–	6	–	

Sarah A. Followes, Single; Age 22.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	11	–	Footer of knit hose.
Plain frame, 20 in.; rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	6	
£.			–	9	6	

Martha Followes; Single; Aged 16.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	9	–	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 18 in.; rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	6	
£.			–	7	6	

Isaac Humberton; Single; Aged 13.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	8	–	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 16 in.; rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	6	
£.			–	6	6	

Theodore Coltman; Single; Aged 13.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
ull earnings - - -			–	7	6	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 15 in.; rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	4				
			–	1	4	
£.			–	6	2	

Isaac Herbert; Single; Aged 15.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	11	–	—
Rib frame, 16 in.; rent - -	1	3				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	9	
£.			–	9	3	

Elizabeth Marlow; Single; Aged 17.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	9	–	Footer of knit shirts.
Plain frame, 15 in.; rent - -	1	–				
Charges - -	–	4				
			–	1	4	
£.			–	7	8	

Charles Marlow; Single; Aged 19.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	13	–	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 22 in.; rent - -	1	3				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	9	
£.			–	11	3	

Gabez Chawner; Single; Aged 35.

	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Full earnings - - -			–	11	–	Knit shirts.
Plain frame, 22 in.; rent - -	1	3				
Charges - -	–	6				
			–	1	9	
£.			–	9	3	

Isaac Herbert, Wigston.

Appendix, No. 12.

PAPER delivered in by Mr. *Thomas Winters*, 8 June 1855.

THE Position of the TRADE in *Leicester*, as respects Numbers and Charges Deducted from Wages in Nine Branches of Trade, in the Month of February 1847.

	Number in Branch.	Average Weekly Charge on each Workman.	Average Weekly Charge on the Whole.	Annual Amount of Charges.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Wrought or fashioned hose branch.	600	– 2 6	75 – –	3,750 – –
Glove branch, paying charges	200	– 4 –	40 – –	2,000 – –
Cap, shirt, and drawer branch	200	– 2 6	30 – –	1,500 – –
Ribb branch - - -	100	– 3 –	15 – –	750 – –
Sock branch - - -	250	– 3 –	52 10 –	2,625 – –
Cut up or spurious hose branch	600	– 4 –	120 – –	6,000 – –
Warp branch - - -	100	– 3 –	15 – –	750 – –
Rotaries, hose branch - -	100	– 8 –	40 – –	2,000 – –
Fancy branch - - -	170	– 6 –	51 – –	2,550 – –
TOTAL - - -	2,320	- - -	438 10 –	21,925 – –

In 1844 the total number of frames in Leicester employed was 3,620. I now give 2,320: say, 300 glove frames, and 100 others working at net rates, will leave 900 partly employed, or not employed at all.

In the town and county in 1844 there were 18,558 frames paying at the rate of 129,906*l.* The poor's rate being for the whole county, in 1841, 95,316*l.*, showing this tax to be in excess of 34,590*l.*

Appendix, No. 13.

PAPER delivered in by Mr. *Thomas Payne*, 15 June 1855.

6 January 1855.			13 January 1855.			20 January 1855.			27 January 1855.		
—	Number of Frames.	Rent.	—	Number of Frames.	Rent.	—	Number of Frames.	Rent.	—	Number of Frames.	Rent.
s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.
7 7½	2	1 6	– 18 3	3	3 –	1 2 11	3	3 –	– 9 4	2	2 –
10 10½	2	2 –	1 5 6	2	14 –	1 16 –	4	4 –	– 6 9	1	1 –
6 9	1	1 –	– 3 6	1	1 –	– 18 –	2	2 –	– 3 2½	1	1 –
11 –	2	2 –	– 6 4	1	3 –	– 5 3	1	1 –	1 5 10½	3	3 6
19 11	3	3 –	4 7 5	6	11 –	1 6 10	5	5 –	– 19 3½	3	3 –
8 7½	2	2 –	– 4 4½	1	1 –	– 18 1	3	3 –	– 10 –	2	2 –
18 –	3	4 6	1 1 8	3	5 6	– 7 –	2	1 11	– 16 –	2	2 –
8 5	2	2 –	– 15 –	2	2 –	1 2 7	3	3 –	– 9 –	1	1 6
16 3	2	2 –	– 19 1½	3	3 –	– 11 10½	2	2 –	– 14 –	2	4 –
1 –	3	3 –	2 12 3	4	8 6	1 9 9½	3	5 6	2 10 8	3	4 6
16 –	2	2 –	1 8 5	3	4 –	– 9 –½	2	2 –	– 19 9½	3	3 –
– 1	3	3 –	– 12 6½	2	2 –	– 18 8	2	3 –	– 16 3	2	2 –
17 7½	2	2 –	– 18 8	2	3 –	– 12 8	2	2 –	2 5 –	3	5 –
16 –	4	8 –	– 9 4	2	2 –	1 7 2	3	4 –	– 15 2	3	3 –
8 3	1	1 –	– 18 –	2	2 –	– 12 –	2	2 –	– 7 6	1	1 –
17 11	3	3 –	– 12 8	2	2 –	– 6 6	1	1 –	– 9 9	2	2 –
7 –	2	4 –	– 6 6½	1	1 –				– 15 10	2	2 –
6 –	1	1 –	—						1 10 –	4	4 –
17 4	40	47 –	17 19 7	40	58 –	14 4 4½	40	44 5	16 3 5	40	46 6

3 March 1855.			10 March 1855.			17 March 1855.			24 March 1855.		
—	Number of Frames.	Rent.	—	Number of Frames.	Rent.	—	Number of Frames.	Rent.	—	Number of Frames.	Rent.
s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.
10 7½	2	2 –	– 11 4	2	2 –	– 5 5	1	2 5	1 2 6½	3	4 –
7 3½	2	1 6	1 4 4½	2	4 –	– 18 7½	3	3 –	– 10 1½	2	2 –
7 –	1	1 –	– 6 8	1	1 –	– 8 9	2	2 –	4 6 2	6	11 –
18 5½	3	3 –	– 9 7	2	2 –	– 10 10	2	2 –	– 10 –	2	2 –
6 9	1	1 –	1 13 –	4	4 –	1 8 7½	3	4 –	– 13 –	2	3 –
10 –	2	2 –	– 5 5	2	2 –	1 5 6	2	4 –	1 7 1	2	4 –
18 4	2	2 –	1 8 6	3	4 –	– 7 6	1	1 –	– 14 –	2	2 –
4 4	2	2 4	1 17 1	6	6 –	1 – 1½	2	3 –	1 – –	3	3 –
14 –	2	4 –	1 2 6	3	3 –	– 9 1	2	2 –	– 14 3½	2	2 –
11 11½	2	2 –	1 1 6	3	3 –	2 11 8	4	8 6	– 15 –	2	4 –
19 6½	3	3 –	– 9 –⅛	2	2 –	1 – 11	3	3 –	– 14 5	2	3 –
1 5	3	3 –	– 12 1½	2	2 –	4 2 11	6	11 –	– 14 7	3	3 –
16 3	2	2 –	– 2 4	1	1 –	– 16 3	2	2 –	– 10 –	2	2 –
13 9	3	5 –	– 11 1	2	2 –	– 2 11	1	1 –	1 10 –	4	4 –
1 5½	3	3 –	1 7 1	3	4 6	– 14 4½	2	2 –	– 5 3½	1	1 –
15 5	2	2 –	– 12 –	2	2 –	– 19 7	3	3 –	– 11 3	2	2 –
6 4	2	2 –				– 5 11	1	1 –			
13 –	2	2 –									
6 4	1	1 –									
3 2 3	40	43 10	13 13 7½	40	44 6	17 9 –	40	54 11	15 16 9	40	52 –

5 May 1855.			12 May 1855.			19 May 1855.			26 May 1855.		
——	Number of Frames.	Rent.	——	Number of Frames.	Rent.	——	Number of Frames.	Rent.	——	Number of Frames.	Rent.
£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.		s. d.
– 12 10	1	2 –	– 18 1½	3	3 –	– 13 4	2	2 –	1 15 –	2	4 –
– 7 7	2	1 9	– 15 10	2	2 –	2 2 9	4	5 –	– 13 4½	2	2 –
– 6 9	1	1 –	– 7 6	1	1 –	– 15 7⅓	2	2 –	1 1 4	3	3 –
– 7 –	1	1 –	– 12 2	2	2 –	2 3 4	3	5 6	1 9 10½	2	5 –
– 15 10	2	2 –	– 11 4½	2	2 –	2 7 2½	5	7 –	1 2 6	2	2 –
– 11 4	2	2 –	1 1 8	2	3 –	1 – –	3	3 –	2 2 7	4	7 –
– 16 4	3	3 –	1 6 9	3	3 –	– 18 9	2	2 –	– 18 9	2	2 –
– 11 11½	2	2 –	– 4 4½	1	1 –	1 12 3	3	3 –	– 4 1	1	1 –
2 5 –	3	8 –	1 12 –	2	5 –	1 15 –	5	5 –	3 4 7	4	8 6
– 6 9	1	1 –	– 17 1	3	3 –	– 18 11½	2	3 –	1 5 3½	4	4 –
– 16 8	2	2 –	1 13 –	4	4 –	3 18 2½	6	11 –	– 16 1	2	2 –
– 4 4	1	1 –	– 15 7½	2	2 –	– 12 9⅓	3	3 –	– 19 8½	3	3 –
1 8 9	3	6 –	– 7 5	1	1 –	—	—	—	1 1 8	2	3 –
– 18 4	3	3 –	2 5 11	6	6 –	—	—	—	2 5 1	4	5 –
– 7 6	1	1 –	2 19 3⅓	5	7 6	—	—	—	1 7 –⅓	3	3 –
– 12 3	2	2 –	– 3 7½	1	1 –	—	—	—	—	—	—
– 8 6	2	2 –	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
– 7 1½	1	1 –	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 3 7	3	3 –	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 18 2	4	5 –	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 6 7	40	49 9	16 11 9	40	46 6	18 18 2½	40	51 6	20 6 11½	40	54 6

	£. s. d.		£. s. d.
6 January 1855 – – –	14 7 4	Average per frame –	– 7 1
13 „ „ – – –	17 19 7	– „ „ –	– 9 –
20 „ „ – – –	14 4 4½	– „ „ –	– 7 1
27 „ „ – – –	16 3 5	– „ „ –	– 8 1
3 March „ – – –	13 2 3	– „ „ –	– 6 7
10 „ „ – – –	13 13 7½	– „ „ –	– 6 10
17 „ „ – – –	17 9 –	– „ „ –	– 8 9
24 „ „ – – –	15 16 9	– „ „ –	– 7 11
5 May „ – – –	15 6 7	– „ „ –	– 7 8
12 „ „ – – –	16 11 9	– „ „ –	– 8 3
19 „ „ – – –	18 18 2	– „ „ –	– 9 5
26 „ „ – – –	20 6 –	– „ „ –	– 10 2
		£.	4 16 10

Divide this by 12 – – – gives 8 *s.* – ¾ *d.* per frame.

Appendix, No 14.

PAPER delivered in by Mr. *Samuel Stone*, 19 June 1855.

Case.

Appendix, No. 14.

Counsel is requested to advise the magistrates of Leicester as to the construction of the recent Act of Parliament, 8 & 9 Vict. c. 77, left herewith; and in order to render this Act intelligible to persons not locally connected with the hosiery manufacture, it is necessary to refer briefly to the mode in which it is conducted. It is proposed, therefore, to describe the cases which may come under the consideration of the magistrates, and distinguish them by numbers.

No. 1. Framework-knitters who take out materials from the manufacturer, to be worked up by their own hands, in a machine, either provided by themselves or by the manufacturer, technically

technically called single hands. These persons take the materials to their own houses, and generally a week's supply at a time. Appendix, No. 14.

No. 2. Framework-knitters who take out materials from the manufacturer, to be worked up by themselves and their wives and children, and employ no other persons than members of their own families. These persons, like Class 1, also take the materials to their own houses, and generally a week's supply at a time.

No. 3. Framework-knitters called master stocking-makers, who take out materials from the manufacturer to be worked up by themselves and others in their employ, and who keep a shop of frames belonging to themselves or provided by the manufacturer, and who employ persons to work up the materials on such frames upon the premises of such master stocking-makers; the persons so employed being unknown to the manufacturer; being engaged by, and responsible to, the stocking-maker alone. The persons so employed do not take the materials to their own homes.

No. 4. Framework-knitters called undertakers, who take out materials in large quantities from the manufacturers, to be worked up by themselves and others in their employ, and who, in addition to keeping a shop of frames, like Class No. 3 abovementioned, employ persons residing in different places to work up such materials at their own houses, either in frames of their own or in frames hired by them from other parties. Both this class and Class No. 3 frequently take out materials from several different manufacturers at the same time, the manufacturer paying them a stipulated price for the goods manufactured from such materials; and these classes deriving their profit from weekly sums charged by them to the workmen for their trouble, and deducted out of the weekly earnings of the workmen.

No. 5. Framework-knitters who work in shops or factories belonging to the manufacturer, and in frames also the property of the manufacturer, an agent or overlooker being paid by the manufacturer to superintend the factory and supply the workmen with materials as required. In these cases the materials are not taken off the premises, nor is the workman entrusted with more at one time than is sufficient for a few hours' labour.

The above has been the mode in which the hosiery manufacture has been carried on for many years; but in consequence of frequent disputes between Classes 3 and 4 and their workmen as to wages, the 8 & 9 Vict. was passed, and came into operation on the 1st January instant; the first section of which enacts, "That from and after the 1st day of January 1846, when any manufacturer of hosiery, or the agent of any such manufacturer, gives out to a workman the materials to be wrought, such manufacturer or agent shall at the same time deliver to such workman a printed or written ticket, signed by such manufacturer, containing the particulars of the agreement between such manufacturer and such workman as in the schedule to this Act annexed; and such manufacturer or agent delivering such ticket shall make, or cause to be made, and shall preserve until the work contracted to be done shall have been completed or paid for, a duplicate of such note or ticket."

The fourth section subjects the manufacturer or agent to a penalty for neglecting or refusing to deliver such ticket with the materials so given out; and the ninth section enacts, "That the word 'manufacturer' in the Act shall be understood to mean any person furnishing the materials of work to be wrought into hosiery goods to be sold or disposed of on his own account; and the word 'agent' to include any person conveying or delivering the same to the workman; and the word 'workman' any person actually employed in the manufacture of the same."

Several questions have been raised as to the construction to be put upon the Act of Parliament, and the manner in which it is to be carried out; and it may be premised that the workmen contend that the effect of this Act is to put an end to the existence of middlemen, such as undertakers and master stocking-makers, and to convert them into the agents of the manufacturer; whilst, on the other hand, the manufacturers contend that such an interference with their mode of conducting business was not contemplated, and that the middleman still remains in the same relative position as before, namely, as workman to the manufacturer, and as master to the men receiving materials from him, the middleman: and that the remedy provided by 6 & 7 Vict., c. 40, s. 2, 3, 7, against a person contracting to work up materials by himself, or by any persons employed by or under him, would be lost if this recent Act of Parliament were to be construed as converting every person who takes out materials to be worked up by himself and others into the agent of the manufacturer.

With respect to Class No. 1.—A ticket from the manufacturer to the single hand working immediately to hire is clearly required; but you are requested to advise whether it will be a sufficient compliance with the Act to give a ticket at the commencement of every new description of work, or of any alteration of price, or whether a new ticket must be given every time that any materials are given to the workmen? (*See* first section and the words "at the same time.")

Opinion.

I am of opinion that it will not be a sufficient compliance with the Act to give a ticket at the commencement of every new description of work, or of any alteration of price; but that a new ticket must be delivered every time that any materials are given out.

Appendix, No. 14.

CASE.

With respect to Class No. 2.—You are requested to advise whether one ticket is sufficient, if issued by the manufacturer to the head of the family, he being the only person known to the manufacturer; or whether each member of the family is entitled to a separate ticket, the effect of which would be to subject the manufacturer to the recognition of parties as workmen who are not known to him, and who are not responsible to him for the materials?

OPINION.

I am of opinion that one ticket issued to the head of the family is sufficient.

CASE.

With respect to Class No. 3 further questions arise.—Is it sufficient for the manufacturer to deliver a ticket to the master stocking-maker; or does this Act render it imperative on him to treat the master stocking-maker as his agent, and to deliver to each workman employed on the premises of the master stocking-maker a separate ticket, thereby rendering the manufacturer responsible for wages to each individual workman, and thereby, in fact, releasing the master stocking-maker from his responsibility to the manufacturer for the safe return of the materials, and the remedy provided by the Act of 6 & 7 Vict., cap. 40?

OPINION.

I am of opinion that it is sufficient for the manufacturer to deliver a ticket to the master stocking-maker. It appears to me that the words of 8 & 9 Vict., c. 77, are not sufficient to show that the Legislature intended to make it compulsory in all cases for the manufacturer to enter into an agreement with the workman who actually bestows his labour on the work, and to convert the master stocking-maker and undertaker into agents for the manufacturer in all cases. If such were the intention, I should have expected to find that intention clearly expressed, or some reference made to 6 & 7 Vict., c. 40; and, in the absence of a clear expression of such an intention, I am of opinion that a ticket is not necessary, unless there is an agreement between the manufacturer and the workman, which I think there is not in Class No. 3; for it is impossible to give a ticket containing the particulars of the agreement between the manufacturer and the workman, where there is not any such agreement. I have used the word "manufacturer" in the meaning given to it by the interpretation clause; by which I understand the owner of the materials who first gives them out to be wrought into hosiery goods, and who will be entitled to all such goods, on his own account, after the materials have been wrought.

CASE.

If it be sufficient for the manufacturer to deliver a ticket to the master stocking-maker only, is it necessary for the master stocking-maker to deliver tickets to the workmen employed on his premises? It will be observed, on reference to the terms of the interpretation clause, that the definitions of "manufacturer" and "agent" do not appear to contemplate the case of the master stocking-maker, he not being the manufacturer as there interpreted, inasmuch as he does not furnish the materials to be wrought into hosiery goods to be sold or disposed of on his own account; neither has he heretofore been the agent of the manufacturers, for although he is the person conveying or delivering the materials to the workmen, yet this is done in the character of an independent contractor with, and personal employer of, the workmen, and not on behalf of the manufacturer as principal.

A further question has been raised as to whether the master stocking-maker is required to give a ticket, inasmuch as it is contended that he does not "give out" to the workman the materials within the meaning of the Act, the materials not being entrusted to him at his own home, but remaining in the possession of his employer all the time; but as this point also arises with respect to Class No. 5, it will be further explained under that head.

OPINION.

I am of opinion that it is not necessary for master stocking-makers to deliver tickets to the workmen employed on their premises. It appears to me that a master stocking-maker cannot be brought within the meaning given to the word "manufacturer" by the interpretation clause; and it is important to observe that the clause does not say that the word "manufacturer" shall "include" &c., but that "in this Act it shall be understood to mean," &c.; and, even if master stocking-makers can be included in the word "agent" (though not legally agents of the manufacturer), the first section does not contain any words sufficient to render it compulsory upon them to deliver a ticket containing the agreement between them and the workmen; for if the words of the interpretation clause, "any person conveying or delivering materials to the workman," are to be introduced into the first clause whenever the word "agent" is mentioned, it will be observed that the word "agent" is omitted in that part of the 1st section which describes the ticket to be delivered, or speaks of the agreement of which the particulars are to be contained in the ticket; and the section would therefore read thus:—"That when any manufacturer of hosiery, or the agent of any such manufacturer, or any person conveying or delivering materials to the workman, gives out to a workman the materials, &c., he shall at the same time deliver, &c. a ticket signed by such manufacturer (not

(not by such manufacturer or agent or other person as aforesaid), containing the particulars of the agreement between such manufacturer (not such manufacturer, or agent, or other person as aforesaid), and such workman;"—and, as before observed, the person giving out the materials could not deliver a ticket containing the agreement between the manufacturer and the workman, in a case falling within Class No. 3, where no such agreement exists. I also think it very doubtful whether master stocking-makers can be said to "give out" materials.

CASE.

With respect to Class 4.—The case of the undertakers and the men employed on their premises, or receiving materials to be worked up at their own houses, you are requested to say whether it will be sufficient for the manufacturer to give a ticket to the undertaker, or whether he is now required to give a ticket to all the men who receive materials from the undertaker; and whether this will render the manufacturer responsible to such men for their wages? and if it be sufficient for the manufacturer to give a ticket to the undertaker, whether it is necessary for the undertaker to give a ticket to the men who work on his premises who are not entrusted with materials at their own houses? The same point as to the undertakers not coming strictly within the interpretation clause, as noticed in the case of the master stocking-maker, also arises.

OPINION.

I am of opinion that it will be sufficient for a manufacturer to give a ticket to the undertaker, though I think it doubtful whether it is necessary, as it is not clear that an undertaker comes within the word "workmen." I understand that in Class No. 4, the undertaker looks to the manufacturer for payment, and that the workmen look to the undertaker, and would be entitled to be paid by him, even though he should not be paid by the manufacturer. I make this observation in consequence of the statement in page 2, "that the undertakers charge the workmen for their trouble, and deduct it from the workmen's earnings," which seems to imply that the workmen are entitled to their earnings from the manufacturer, subject to a deduction therefrom by the undertakers. If, however, the undertakers are authorised by the manufacturers to employ the workmen to do the work, and are authorised by the workmen to deduct something for their trouble from the earnings of the workmen, it would seem that substantially there is an agreement in this case between the manufacturer and the workmen; and if so, I am of opinion that the tickets signed by the manufacturer must be delivered to the workmen who manufacture the goods, whether they work at their own houses, or work on the premises of the undertaker.

CASE.

With respect to Class No. 5, the men employed in the shops or factories belonging to the manufacturer, and superintended by his overlooker, and receiving materials as required (probably once or twice, or oftener, a day) from the overlooker. You are requested to advise as to the necessity for the manufacturer giving a ticket to men so employed. An information has been laid before the Leicester magistrates against manufacturers by Charles Mitchell, a workman, for not giving such ticket, and the facts as proved on evidence appear to be, that Mitchell is in the employ of Frisby & Chawner, manufacturers of hosiery, and has worked in their employ for some weeks; that on the 1st of January the overlooker delivered some cotton to him with a ticket not containing several of the particulars required by the Act; that he informed them he required a proper ticket; that he works up the materials in a machine in the factory; that he is not permitted to take them off the premises; that the workmen go to the overlooker for materials as they want them, once or twice in a day, as it may happen; that the materials are weighed by the overlooker when delivered to the workman; that the weight is not communicated to the workman; and that there is no pass-book showing the quantity of materials received by the workman; that the workman is not responsible for the materials, as in the case of persons entrusted with materials at their own homes, but would be punishable for felony in case they were to steal them from the factory. On this state of facts, it was contended by the solicitor of the manufacturers that no ticket was required, inasmuch as the materials were not "given out" to the workman within the meaning of the Act; that the Act extends to those cases only where the materials are given out to the workmen to be worked up at their own homes; that in this case the materials were never out of the manufacturers' possession; that if this class of workmen be within the Act, it would be necessary to give a ticket every time materials, however small the quantity, are supplied, namely, once or twice a day, the Act requiring a ticket to be delivered at the same time that materials are given out; that such an interpretation would create great perplexity, and could not have been intended. On the part of the workmen it is contended, that nothing short of a ticket in the form given by the Act will exempt the employer from the penalty when he delivers materials to be worked up into hosiery, whether the workman works in or out of the employer's factory; that the Act intended to give every workman a written statement of the price, and the quantity of labour required to be performed for it; that any other construction would greatly limit the extent and benefit of the Act; that the words "given out" do not mean the giving out of the master's possession, but the delivery to the workmen, of any materials for the purpose of being wrought into hosiery goods. You are requested to advise whether the manufacturers complained of in this information, and who may be considered as representing Class No. 5, have subjected themselves to a penalty for not giving a ticket to workmen so employed as before mentioned?

Appendix, No. 14.

OPINION.

In Class No. 5, I think a ticket is not necessary. By the words "give out" I think the Legislature must have intended that the workman should be constituted a bailee of the materials, so that he might maintain trespass against any one who might take them from him; and not a mere delivery when the goods (as in this case) are not so far taken out of the possession of the manufacturer as to prevent him from indicting for larceny, in case they should be stolen.

I am of opinion that, in the case in which the information has been laid, the manufacturers have not subjected themselves to a penalty.

17 January, 1846. *B. Peacock*, Temple.

Appendix, No. 15.

LETTER from Mr. *Thomas Payne*.

Sir, Hinckley, 18 June 1855.

Appendix, No. 15. I BEG to hand you Statement of Rent paid by Mrs. Farryin (the person alluded to by Sketchley), from 30th September 1854 to 16th June 1855:

			s.	d.
10 February 1855	- - -	19 weeks - - -	3	6
17 „ „	- - -	1 „ - - -	2	–
24 „ „	- - -	1 „ - - -	–	9
3 March „	- - -	1 „ - - -	1	–
10 „ „	- - -	1 „ - - -	1	–
17 „ „	- - -	1 „ - - -	1	–
31 „ „	- - -	2 „ - - -	1	9
7 April „	- - -	1 „ - - -	1	–
16 June „	- - -	10 „ - - -	nothing.	
		37 weeks.	12	– paid.

Being less than 4*d.* per week for rent of frame, although she has now 10 lbs. 11 oz. of cotton in hand, and still holds the frame.

Yours, &c.

Mr. Street, London. (signed) *Thomas Payne.*

P.S.—The man whom Sketchley worked with, says he might have had more work, but would not do it.

COPY of NOTE signed by Mrs. *Farryin*, and sent to *C. W. Packe*, Esq., M.P.

Hinckley, 18 June 1855.

I HAVE worked for Mr. Payne three years, and never had any occasion, nor did I make any complaint of him as a master; he has always paid a regular trade price, and when I have taken in work, I have received cotton back.

I never told Sketchley, or any one else, that Mr. Payne had taken 3*s.* 6*d.* rent for six weeks; it was 19 weeks from the time I last took in, to the 10th February, when I was charged 3*s.* 6*d.* I did not cry, or think it hard; it was my own proposition.

(signed) *Elizabeth Farryin.*

Witness, *William Truslove.*

Appendix, No. 16.

PAPER delivered in by Mr. *Hugh Owen*, Chief Clerk to the Poor Law Board, 29 June 1855.

UNION.	PARISHES.	Amount expended in Relief of the Poor; Years ended at Lady-day: 1847. £. s. d.	1848. £. s. d.
Hinckley	Aston Flamville	72 10 –	34 5 –
	Barwell	678 8 –	797 18 –
	Burbage	862 16 –	1,207 5 –
	Earl Shilton	963 8 –	1,245 18 –
	Elmsthorpe	8 15 –	1 9 –
	Hinckley	3,525 2 –	4,940 19 –
	Sapcote	355 16 –	486 19 –
	Sharnford	158 9 –	159 15 –
	Stony Stanton	196 – –	239 15 –
	Burton Hastings	170 12 –	170 16 –
	Stretton Baskerville	78 – –	53 5 –
	£.	7,069 16 –	9,338 4 –
Leicester	All Saints	1,859 15 –	2,686 15 –
	St. Leonard	245 6 –	289 16 –
	St. Margaret	11,964 13 –	21,262 10 –
	St. Martin	1,808 14 –	2,305 17 –
	St. Mary	3,415 5 –	5,192 1 –
	The Newarke	211 12 –	309 14 –
	St. Nicholas	673 2 –	939 4 –
	The Castle View	45 – –	62 15 –
	£.	20,223 7 –	33,048 12 –

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The system of stoppages was not so much the practice in former years, when trade was prosperous, 8589–8594——The town of Leicester has never been in a prosperous state within the recollection of witness, 8595–8598——Examination to the effect that improved machinery does not reduce the actual wages or prices paid to those working at old and inferior machinery, 8599–8650——Explanation as to the mode adopted by witness in getting up petitions from Nottingham, &c., against the rent and charges system, 8651–8673.

Brown, Samuel. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Has been connected with the hosiery trade all his life in different capacities, 4780–4784——Duties of a middleman, 4785——Amount of the charges deducted by witness as middleman some years ago, 4786–4792——Injury to the workmen in middlemen employing frames of their own and stinting the work, 4795–4798——General complaint on the part of workmen against the system of stints practised by middlemen, 4799——Adoption of the net system about nine years ago by witness's employers, W. Preston & Co.; satisfactory operation of the system, both employer and employed being benefited by it, 4800–4825. 4831–4835——Necessity of the contemplated Act of Parliament, in order to prevent unprincipled employers taking unfair advantage of their workmen, 4286–4830.

Bryan, Sarah. (Analysis of her Evidence.)—Works five frames under Mr. Corah, of Leicester, two of which are worked by her own family, 8885–8893——Has not been in any way biassed in regard to her evidence, 8894–8900——Her family has worked for Mr. Corah's firm for the last 38 years, she having succeeded her husband, who held the frames as middleman, and who died 12 years ago, 8901–8903. 8995–9001——The question of frame rent in the event of sickness has not arisen in the case of witness, who cannot speak positively as to Mr. Corah's practice on this point in the case of others, 8904–8910. 8989–8993.

Earnings of witness's hands, less the deduction of frame rent and charges, 8911–8927. 8941–8971——Charges amounting to 1 *s.* paid to witness, besides the 1 *s.* frame rent, for

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Bryan, Sarah. (Analysis of her Evidence)—continued.

Mr. Corah; lowness of such charges, 8926–8933——Delay occasionally in obtaining work at the warehouse, 8932–8934——Hours of labour of witness's hands, 8935–8941. 8949–8952——The work is in the sham-knit branch of the trade, which is the lowest paid branch, and is generally worked at by women and children, or old men, and not by able-bodied or skilful operatives, 8943–8948. 8977–8986——Cost of about 6*d.* a week for candles and needles, which expense is paid by the operatives, 8953. 8958–8961. 8968.

Practice of Mr. Corah to give out full work, 8972–8975——All the frames held by witness belong to Mr. Corah, 8987, 8988——Though witness's hands would like more for their labour, they do not complain against the rent and charges system, 8994——Reduction of wages and prices in the case of sham-knit hose, there being no corresponding reduction of frame rent; effect of improved machinery hereon, 9002-9015.

Buckby, George. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Has been a framework-knitter for more than 30 years, 1422–1425—— Description of work on which employed, 1424. 1428——Net system of wages under which witness has recently worked, 1427——Complaints made by workmen against the rents and charges to which they are subject, 1429–1431. 1433——Sundry instances adduced in which men have been compelled to pay full frame rent for short work, 1432, 1433. 1440. 1479. 1530. 1591–1598——The practice of full rent and short work is very general, there being however some honourable exceptions, 1433, 1434. 1442. 1445.

Greater exactions in the case of the wide frames than of narrow frames, 1435, 1436——The weekly rent for a wide frame varies from 1 *s.* to 3 *s.* 6 *d.*; 1437——Understanding on the part of workmen as to the rent to be paid, but not as to the quantity of work to be given them to do, 1438–1442——Increase of late years in the practice of deducting full charges for partial employment, 1443, 1444——Undue stoppages are made more by the middlemen than by the manufacturers, 1445, 1446. 1449–1451.

Powerlessness of the operatives to prevent exorbitant deductions, 1447. 1517, 1518. 1524–1529. 1549, 1550. 1583–1589. 1601–1605——Reference to the fact of the workmen not being entitled to poor-law relief if they can get work at any price, however low it may be, 1447, 1448——Reference to several hosiers who, contrary to the general rule, have adopted the system of net wages, 1452–1454——Experience of witness as to the net contract system, 1455——The net system is very simple and plain, 1456.

Reference to and explanation upon a paper (which witness delivers in), being a statement of net contracts and charges in regard to the glove branch, as agreed to some eight or nine years ago by the manufacturers and middlemen and the workmen, 1457–1461——Explanation as to the discontinuance after a few years of the foregoing arrangement, through the competition of the middlemen, 1462–1471——Adoption of the net system in some factories adverted to, 1465. 1472——Reasonable adjustment of prices by the arrangement in question, 1469.

Benefits to employer and employed if a proper system of net contracts were adopted generally, 1473–1475——Objection to a system of poundage unless it be uniform, and unless the allowance in lieu of frame rent, &c. be calculated always at the same rate, 1475–1482——Instance showing how the poundage system may be abused, 1479. 1497–1504——Causes which produce a superabundance of labour, to the detriment of the operatives, 1483–1489. 1519–1528——Full employment occasionally, 1489, 1490——Expediency of there being no stoppages, either in times of abundant employment or in times of slackness, 1491–1496. 1522, 1523. 1560.

The operatives merely demand that they shall not pay rent for the machine when they do not use it, 1496——They by no means object to the manufacturer making a fair profit upon his outlay in machinery, 1505–1507——Readiness of the manufacturer to secure profit by reducing the wages of the operatives, 1508, 1509——Absence of inducement to the workmen to own frames; obstacle also in their poverty, 1510–1518. 1603–1605——Employment of superabundant labour, or women and children, further adverted to as coming into competition with skilled labour in times of depression, 1519–1523——Extreme poverty of the framework-knitters adverted to, 1524. 1550. 1603.

Circumstance of witness having in three years paid 22 *l.* 10 *s.* in rent for a frame which cost the middleman only 2 *l.* 15 *s.*; 1530–1535——Statement as to the same middleman having spread over eighteen frames work which the manufacturer (Mr. Edward Mitchell) directed should be done by twelve frames; correction of the proceeding subsequently, and consequence as regards the six men whose work was stopped thereby, 1530. 1536–1540.

Representation by witness of the opinions of the framework-knitters of Leicester, 1544–1547——Unanimous feeling generally of the operatives in favour of the removal of the rent and charges system, 1548. 1551, *et seq.*——Complaint that the first earnings of the operative at the frame are not his own, 1560, 1561. 1577–1580——Insufficiency of the proposition of Mr. Biggs, for abolishing frame rent only, 1562–1567——Though the

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the operatives do not wish for legislative interference with the rate of wages, they anticipate considerable protection from an Act, which, though it may not improve their wages, will still abolish stoppages and thereby prevent fraud, 1569–1582. 1590–1600.

[Second Examination.]—Clear illustration of the working of the net system, and of the gross system in the paper before delivered, 1606——Profit derived by the hosier from frame-rent during periods of slackness when hosiery is not in demand, 1607–1609. 1614, 1615——Liability of the workman to decline unprofitable work further adverted to, 1610–1613. 1616, 1617.

Witness refers to some specific cases of excessive stoppages from earnings; he is willing to mention the names of the parties confidentially to the Chairman of the Committee, 1618–1656——Hardship in charging the frame rent whilst necessary alterations are being made in the frame in the event of an alteration of the work, 1627. 1631–1638——Greater facility afforded by narrow frames than by wide frames for the manufacture of gloves, 1657–1663.

Burbage (*Leicester*). Statement of the gross earnings in this place of eight hands belonging to the common wrought-hose branch, and the deductions therefrom, *App. p.* 600.

Burroughs, ——. Illustration in the case of this workman of the good earnings in the straight-down branch of the trade, *Walker* 2123–2127.

Buswell, Charles (*Leicester*). Misrepresentation by this workman before Mr. Commissioner Muggeridge in 1844, *Corah* 3194.

Butcher William. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Has been engaged in the hosiery manufacture at Leicester for about 30 years, 1784, 1785——Number of frames employed by witness, 1786–1788——He adopts the system of frame rent, 1789. 1797——Respect in which the frame rent system operates to the injury of the workman, 1790. 1799 *et seq.*——Difficulty of enforcing by Act the abolition generally of frame rents, 1791–1796. 1822. 1873——Difficulty in the middleman being paid simply by the manufacturer, 1794, 1795.

Witness never takes full rent for short work, 1798. 1846——Understanding that many manfacturers stint the work and take full rent, more especially when trade is bad, 1799–1801. 1812–1817. 1845, 1846. 1849–1856——How far the manufacturer in giving out work to be done on his own frames has any security that the middleman does not improperly spread out the work in order to employ also frames belonging to himself, 1802–1807. 1897–1907——Absence of control on the part of the manufacturer as to the use of his frames by the workman when trade is good, 1807–1811.

Opportunities of the middlemen to stint the work and charge full rent; how far it may be their practice to do so, 1818–1820. 1844–1848. 1895–1907——Advantage if some of the operatives could be withdrawn for other employment, 1823. 1879, 1880——Extent to which frames and labour would go out of employment if rent were abolished, 1824–1828. 1863. 1868–1870. 1872. 1879. 1916, 1917——Means by which the manufacturer might compensate himself for the loss of frame rent 1826–1832. 1834. 1859–1861. 1869. 1872——Grievously low state of framework-knitters' wages, 1833——Great expense of repairing the frames, 1834.

Benefit to the operative if there were no frame rents, 1835. 1862, 1863. 1879, 1880——Propriety of the manufacturer receiving a return for the capital involved in his frames, 1836–1839. 1861——Injury to the trade, and consequently to the manufacturers in the market being glutted for the sake of the frames being employed, 1840–1843. 1857, 1858. 1915, 1916——Approval of an Act to abolish frame rent, if such Act can be rendered operative, 1862, 1863. 1873–1880——Inability of the workman to resist exactions by his employer, 1864–1867.

Belief that there is no selection by the manufacturers of slow or inexpert hands when trade is dull, 1881–1894——Instance of witness not making full deduction for short work, 1883–1890——Check upon the middlemen bringing in inferior work, 1905–1907 As a rule the workmen are acquainted with the price paid at the warehouse for the work done by them for the middleman, 1908–1914——Great hardship if the rent be charged during the time a workman may be occupied in altering the frame; witness is not aware of any instance of this exaction, 1918.

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Capitalists. Impracticability of any capitalists, save manufacturers, being able to make large profits by holding frames, *Biggs* 536–543——Great evil to the trade in there being so many small capitalists in it, *Muggeridge* 2691–2700. 2806——Advantage of large capitalists as in Leicester, *ib.* 2806——Advantages to the workmen in holding frames from large manufacturers and men of capital, *Ratcliffe* 6197, 6198. 6362–6365; *B. Elliott* 8011–8018.

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Caps. The caps made by witness at Blaby are a fancy article, and require to be made on narrow frames, *Freer* 9071-9074——Particulars as to the earnings of witness and his hands in making caps, *ib.* 9080-9085. 9109-9141——The cap trade at Blaby has not varied much of late years, *ib.* 9137.

Careful Use of Frames. Circumstance of manufacturers not in some way rewarding workmen who use their frames with care, *Billson* 4259-4263.

Carver & Son. Witness is connected with the firm of Carver & Son, of Nottingham, and is manager of their machinery, &c., *Street* 7229-7233——Superintends from 700 to 1,000 frames, none of which are in factory, *ib.* 7234-7237——About four-fifths of the frames are worked through the agency of middlemen or master stocking-makers, *ib.* 7243-7245——Messrs. Carver & Son never give out short work, nor do they take rent during sickness, *ib.* 7252-7256. 7259——Security that the middlemen under Messrs. Carver & Son do not take rent in cases of sickness, *ib.* 7260-7266——Average net earnings in the several branches of manufacture carried on by Messrs. Carver & Son, *ib.* 7342-7347.

Cayman, Thomas, and Family (Enderby). Good weekly earnings of this family, twelve persons earning at the rate of nearly 9*s.* each, *Corah* 3217-3225.

Charges or Stoppages. See *Frame Rents. Middlemen. Rent and Charges. Seaming. Shop Charges. Short Work, or Stints. Sickness. Taking in Charge. Winding.*

Chawner v. *Cummings.* Reference to the case of Chawner *v.* Cummings, tried in the Court of Queen's Bench in 1845; doubtful grounds on which it was decided that stoppages were legal, *Cummings* 1022-1033——The case was instituted for the purpose of trying the right of stoppage, without any allegation that the stoppages were exorbitant, *ib.* 1023. 1026, 1027. 1030——Probability of a different judgment, if the charges were as excessive as they often are, *ib.* 1031-1033.

Case of Chawner *v.* Cummings, adverted to as resulting injuriously to the workmen, *J. Elliott* 1709, 1710——Reference to the grounds on which judgment was given that stoppages were legal, *Muggeridge* 2657-2667——The case resulted in the decision that stoppages were legal and in conformity with the Truck Act, *Stone* 6130-6134. 6136-6140——Witness was solicitor for the plaintiff in the case of Chawner *v.* Cummings, the decision in which case settled the right to make stoppages, *Briggs* 8341, 8342. 8357-8358.

Chemnitz. See *Saxony.*

Children. Boys or girls are charged the same frame rent as adults and experienced workmen, *Biggs* 398, 399; *Collins* 1272, 1273. 1291, 1292; *Corah* 3369-3372. 3421-3427; *Morley* 6555——There are numbers of children employed who do not earn enough to support themselves, *Cummings* 1136——Probability of other means of employment for children if they did not work the frames, *ib.* 1137-1140——Advantage if the children were all employed in factories, *Collins* 1293. 1336——The younger and feebler hands would chiefly be thrown out of employment if deductions were abolished, *J. Elliott* 1750, 1751. 1754, 1755——Evil in the employment of young children who should be at school, *Muggeridge* 2621, 2622.

Statement showing the earnings of children employed under middlemen in the neighbourhood of Hinckley, &c., *Corah* 2923-2945——The children who are not very young have each a seperate frame, *ib.* 2953——Reference to a statement by a manufacturer at Hinckley, showing the evil of putting children to the trade, *ib.* 3372——Witness cannot state the average age at which children begin to work, or the hours for which they do work, *ib.* 3531-3544——Injury to the frames when worked by children who are charged full rent, though they cannot do so much work as able hands, *ib.* 3679.

Defence of an uniform frame rent in the case of children as of adults, *Billson* 4075-4077. 4127, 4128; *Ratcliffe* 6174-6178; *Allen* 6956; *Street* 8258——Age at which children are first put to work, *Billson* 4120-4126——Grievance of the system of stoppages in the case of old men and children, *Winters* 4926——Children sometimes begin to work for witness's firm when ten years of age, though their commencing till twelve years old is discouraged, *Morley* 6554——Advantage if children were brought up to the trade more regularly and constantly, *ib.* 6762-6765——Very few children employed by witness; their ages, *B. Elliott* 7567, 7568. 7609. 7610. 7622-7625——Large number of children in the cotton branch of the trade adverted to as arising from the insufficient earnings of parents to support their families, and the want of other employment, *Mason* 9696-9699. 9710-9717.

The Committee consider that the employment of children in the stocking frame is objectionable, and ought to be discouraged, *Rep. p.* iv.

See also *Drugging Children. Education. Unskilled Labour. Winding. Women and Children.*

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Children's Socks. Illustration of the earnings of workmen on children's socks, with the weekly average, *App. p.* 576.

Circular Frames. The introduction of the circular machine is likely to reduce still lower the position of the framework knitters, *Biggs* 565, 566——The circular frame has almost thrown out of work the straight-down hose branch, *Walker* 2196——Inferior description of goods to which circular frames are applicable, *ib.* 2361, 2362——Circumstance of witness's wide frames being of late undermined by the operation of circular machinery, *Corah* 3260, 3261——A circular frame costs about 30 *l.*, *ib.* 3338——Facility of produce by the employment of circular frames, *Ginns* 3962–3966.

See also *Improved Machinery.*

Cobley, Charles (*Hinckley*). Frame rent charged to this workman during sickness, so that in a period of three weeks, after earning and paying 6 *s.* 3*d.*, he was still 4 *s.* 6 *d.* in debt, *Ginns* 3949–3951.

Collard, Mr. Practice of Mr. Collard, formerly middleman at Derby, to deduct full rent and charges in cases of sickness and in times of partial employment, *Greaves* 8047–8051.

College Factory. Statement showing the working at this factory of the new system and of the old system, *App. p.* 598.

Collins, Thomas. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Hosiery manufacturer at Leicester, 1195, 1196——Number of frames employed by witness in factory and in private houses, 1197–1206——Adoption of the net system of wages in the factory, 1207. 1210. 1215. 1217——Optional system adopted as regards the domestic manufacture; some workmen preferring the net system, and some, who are the larger number and the best hands, preferring the rent system, 1208 1234. 1242–1260——Deduction of 2 ½ *d.* in the shilling under the net system, 1212–1214——Decided preference given by witness to the net system, 1221–1229. 1256, 1257.

Considerable satisfaction of the workmen with the net system, which is a boon mainly to the industrious man, 1221. 1223–1225. 1229–1235. 1256–1260——Preference on the part of the idle and the worst hands for the rent system, 1226–1229——Particulars as to the use of rotary frames by witness, 1237–1241. 1339–1343——Witness has frequently altered from one system to another in order to please his men, but intends henceforth to abide by the net system, 1242–1257.

Uniform rent of 1 *s.* a week for narrow frames, 1261–1268——Frequent practice of giving out short work and taking full rent, 1269–1271. 1278——Full rent charged in the case of women or children, 1272, 1273. 1291, 1292——New frames are not on the increase, 1274——Advantage to the middleman to employ slow hands, if the frames are his own, 1275–1277——Obstacle to workmen becoming owners of frames, 1279–1281——Instance of witness having been asked several years ago to pay rent for a frame of his own, 1281–1283.

Rise of late years in the frame rent, 1284——Fall in the price of hosiery articles, 1285. 1350–1357——Effect of the rent system in inducing surplus employment, and in deteriorating the condition of the workman, 1286. 1288–1292——Statement as to new frames paying as well formerly as at present, on account of the greater outlay now in repairs, 1286, 1287. 1303–1318. 1325, 1326——Great importance of extending the factory system and net wages, which might be done without difficulty, 1293–1296. 1330–1332. 1335, 1336. 1360 *et seq.*——Approval of an Act of Parliament in order to enforce the abolition of rent and the adoption of a net system, 1297, 1298. 1319, 1320——Lapse of time in which, without legislative interference, the net system will probably be adopted, 1298–1302, 1372–1374.

Witness signed the petition to the House in 1854, in which frame rent and other stoppages are designated as "arbitrary and uncertain, and in many instances of excessive amount," 1319, 1320——Concurrence in the statement of Mr. Biggs as to the cost of frames and of repairs, and the profit accruing from the rent, 1321–1324——More satisfactory relations formerly than at present between employers and employed, 1327–1329——Slight education of the children formerly, as well as at present, 1333–1335——Opportunity for education if the rent system be abolished, 1335, 1336. 1370 1380–1385.

Better price for labour under a net system in factories, 1336. 1360–1369. 1371. 1386–1419——Age at which children are now put to work; obstacle to education thereby, 1337, 1338. 1375–1380——Adoption of the net system in the case of steam machinery without the necessity of an Act of Parliament, 1343–1349——Fall in the rate of wages consequent on the over supply of goods and the declension in the price, 1350–1358.

Profit of hosiers on stockings adverted to, 1398–1403——Comparison of the system of gross wages with that of net wages, showing the great advantage of the latter to the industrious workman, 1404–1419——An inferior frame will produce work as quickly and as well as a new or more valuable one, 1420, 1421.

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Combinations of Workmen. Check improperly placed by law upon combinations of workmen on account of the wide definition of the words "obstruction" and "molestation;" case in point, *Winters* 5014-5027.——*See* also *Agitation and Complaint. Strikes.*

Commission of 1844. Reference to the inquiries under the Commission appointed in 1844, as first making clear the evils of the rent system, *Biggs* 378——Great ability of the report of the Commissioner (Mr. Muggeridge); sound and incontrovertible conclusions arrived at by him, *ib.* 395——Extract from Mr. Muggeridge's report in strong condemnation of the frame rent system, *ib.* 396.

Witness was appointed, under a Royal Commission in 1844, to inquire into the condition of the framework knitters of Leicester, Derby, and Nottingham, *Muggeridge* 2559, 2560. 2562——The Commission was appointed mainly in consequence of a petition, signed by 25,000 persons, complaining of distress, *ib.* 2561——Witness examined nearly 600 witnesses, and drew up a report upon the evidence, *ib.* 2563, 2564——Sundry opportunities of witness for acquiring information in regard to the condition of the working classes generally, *ib.* 2565-2568——With regard to framework knitters, witness, as Commissioner, considered their complaints well-founded, *ib.* 2569, 2570——Nature of the complaints brought before witness, *ib.* 2571, 2572. 2574, 2575——Sundry extracts from witness's report cited as showing his condemnation of practices under the rent and charges system, *ib.* 2573-2587.

Witness questions the accuracy of statements made before the Commission in 1844 in regard to frame rent exactions, *Walker* 2211-2213——Instances of several mis-statements having been made by workmen before the Commissioner, *Corah* 3194-3196——Circumstance of witness having recently heard from an Independent minister that a man was asked to state untruly before the Commissioner that his earnings were only 8*s.* a week, *ib.* 3196-3216——Partial and worthless character of the evidence given before the Commissioner, *Allen* 7046-7051.

Competition. No fear of competition from independent frames in the event of extending steam power in factories, *Mitchell* 106-110——Advantage of the rotary frame as a means of competition with the common frame, *Collins* 1239——Competition from the hosiery manufacture of Germany which led to a fall of prices and of wages in this country, *ib.* 1356-1358——Improbability of undue competition from Germany in the event of increased prices under the net system, *ib.* 1392-1397——Effect of foreign competition in depreciating home labour, *Walker* 2167——Foreign competition is one cause of depression in the trade, *Corah* 3587——Obstacle at present to manufacturers adopting a net system on account of the competition of those who by making stoppages can undersell them, *Briggs* 8363-8378.

Complaint. See *Agitation and Complaint.*

Condition of Operatives:

1. *Wretched Condition of Framework Knitters.*
2. *How far the Men are at the Mercy of their Masters.*

1. *Wretched Condition of Framework Knitters:*

Advantage to the workmen if, instead of partial work and limited wages, he were to seek agricultural or other employment, or even at times to go without employment altogether, *Mitchell* 33. 60-68. 94-105. 230-235——During the last thirty years the workmen in the hosiery trade have been gradually becoming more and more stricken in poverty, through reduced earnings, *ib.* 291-302——Better condition of paupers in workhouses than of framework knitters at half wages, or at their present earnings, *Biggs* 379. 409. 419. 559. 762-765——The employment of labour at rates which reduce the workmen below the workhouse labour is worse than no employment at all, or pauperism, *ib.* 558, 559. 561. 567. 617, 618, 621. 629. 631. 663-668. 762-765——If 30,000 framework knitters were at once thrown out of employment, it would be the best thing possible for them, *ib.* 567.

Pauperism could not be worse than the present condition of the framework knitters, *Cummings* 1012. 1108——Extreme poverty of the framework knitters adverted to, *Buckby* 1524. 1550. 1603——Grievously low state of framework knitters' wages, *Butcher* 1833——It would be in the end better for the workmen to go without short work and minimum earnings, *Abbott* 2027, 2028——Means by which alone the condition of the operatives can be permanently or generally improved, *Muggeridge* 2573——An immense deal has already been done to ameliorate the condition of the operatives, *ib.* 2527——Advantage rather than injury to the operatives if, by the abolition of frame rent, a large number of them were obliged to seek other employment, *ib.* 2594-2601. 2674-2676. 2685-2690. 2874, 2875.

Miserable condition of the Hinckley operatives, many of whom are in a state of starvation, *Mead* 4609 *et seq.*——Much better position of many stocking-makers at Hinckley when obliged to go to the poorhouse, *ib.* 4632——Deplorable condition of the operatives adverted to, *Richmond* 5268. 5371-5373——Better condition of the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire framework knitters at present than some years ago, *B. Elliott* 7557——Unfitness generally of framework knitters for very laborious work, *Mason* 9776.

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Condition of Operatives—continued.

2. *How far the Men are at the Mercy of their Masters:*

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Cut Hose. Total amount of earnings and deductions for frame rent and charges of eight men while upon a stint of employment in the cut-hose branch, *App. p.* 570——Amount earned upon the net payment system after 2¼*d.* per shilling is deducted as equivalent for rent and charges, as agreed to by workmen and employer, *ib.*

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Dayman, Thomas (*Enderby*). Statement of the net earnings of hands in the shop of T. Dayman, *App. p.* 592.

Deane, William. Reference to evidence of Mr. Deane, of Loughborough, before the Commissioner in 1844 as unfavourable to the rent system; non-concurrence therein, *Ratcliffe* 6326-6331. 6335–6540.

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The Committee consider that the condition of the framework-knitters, in some branches of the manufacture, and in some districts, has long been and continues to be one of great depression, *Rep. p.* iii——This depression is continued and aggravated by peculiar circumstances in the mode of conducting the manufacture and paying the wages, *ib.*

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Derby. Lack of demand in Derby for the labour of framework-knitters; bad state of the hosiery trade there, *Greaves* 8052, 8053. 8127, 8128. 8135, 8136. 8141, 8142. 8152-8154——Different earnings in the different branches of the trade as carried on at Derby, *ib.* 8054-8080. 8181-8204. 8313-8332—— There are three different systems in Derby for taking charges for work; explanation hereon, *ib.* 8062-8080. 8313-8332——Constant practice in Derby at the present time to take full rent and charges, under the Leicester system, in cases of partial work, *ib.* 8072. 8129, 8130. 8136-8138——Illustration of the average gross earnings, and deductions therefrom, in the case of stocking-knitters, &c., *ib.* 8181-8204. 8313-8332——Statement as to the extent to which the Derby manufacturers, as well as the middlemen, are implicated in the practice of taking full rent for short work, *ib.* 8261-8270——Rent of 1 *s.* a week paid for frames of small value, *ib.* 8273-8276.

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1. *Under the Rent and Charges System, as at present:*

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Farryin, Elizabeth (Hinckley). Exceeding hardship in the deduction by Mr. Payne, manufacturer, of frame-rent for several weeks during which a woman named Farryin was disabled from work, *Sketchley* 3753–3757.

Evidence in denial of Sketchley's statement as to deductions by witness in the case of the woman Farryin, *Payne* 5883–5887. 5966–5973——Explanatory statement by Mr. Payne, dated 18 June 1855, in regard to the rent deducted, showing that only 12*d.* were paid for rent in thirty-seven weeks, *App. p.* 614——Statement by Mrs. Farryin, dated 18 June 1855, that she never complained of Mr. Payne as a master, or of his prices or deductions, *ib.*——Change of fashion is one cause of the depression in the trade, *Muggeridge* 2709; *Corah* 3585; *Mason* 9642. 9655–9661. 9726; *Rep. p.* iii——Great change of late years in the character of the hose made on narrow frames, *Nicholson* 8809–8811.

Felkin, Mr. Exception taken to the evidence given by Mr. Felkin before the Commissioner in 1844, *Morley* 6677–6682.

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Foulds, William, and Son. Earnings of William Foulds and son at two frames under the system of gross wages and rent, and under the net or poundage system, *Biggs* 378, 379. 476–496——Deduction from gross wages under the old custom at the rate of 22½ per cent., and under the poundage system at the rate of 8½ per cent., *ib.* 378, 379. 488——The case of Foulds and his son is an extreme one as regards the benefits of the poundage system, *ib.* 544. 682.

Frame Clubs. How far advisable to encourage the system of frame clubs, so that the workmen may have opportunities to purchase frames, and thereby save the deductions for rent and charges, *Heard* 7221–7228——Operation of frame clubs in former years adverted to, *Nicholson* 8839–8884.

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FRAME RENTS:

I. *Amount of Weekly Charge:*

1. Uniform Charge of 1 *s.* for Narrow Frames in Leicestershire.
2. Different Rent for Frames of different Sizes.
3. Practice as to the Charge in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

II. *Disapproval generally of Frame-rent:*

1. Objections to the Principle of Rent for Frames.
2. Large Profits actually made, objected to.

III. *Defence of the present System:*

1. Approval of the Principle of Frame-rent.
2. Denial that the Profits are at all exorbitant.

IV. *Conclusions of the Committee in condemnation of Profit from Frames, and in favour of the Abolition of Frame-rent.*

I. *Amount of Weekly Charge:*

1. Uniform Charge of 1 *s.* for Narrow Frames in Leicestershire:

The practice of charging 1 *s.* for rent is uniform, and is adopted under circumstances most unjust to the workman, *Biggs* 396–403——The same rent is charged for inferior as for good frames, *Biggs* 397; *Greaves* 8273–8276——Full rent charged in the case of women or children, *Biggs* 398, 399; *Collins* 1272, 1273. 1291, 1292; *Corah* 3369–3372. 3421–3427; *Morley* 6555; *Emmerson* 7659–7662——Uniform rent of 1 *s.* a week for narrow frames in the wrought hose trade, *Cummings* 907–914. 919, 920; *Collins* 1261–1268; *Winters* 4838; *Newstead* 5525–5527——Rise of late years in the frame-rent, *Collins* 1284——An inferior frame will produce work as quickly and as well as a new or more valuable one, *ib.* 1420, 1421——Full rent paid by aged operatives though unable to do much work, *Sketchley* 3764–3766.

Argument in favour of uniform rent, notwithstanding the variation in the amount of produce, *Walker* 2168, 2169——General charge of 1 *s.* a week by witness for the 1,000 frames possessed by him; similar rent charged by the middlemen for the 1,000 independent frames employed by witness, *Corah* 2904. 3369–3372. 3421–3427. 3452. 3455——Every one pays the same rent without reference to the value of the frame, *ib.* 3432–3435——Defence of a similar frame-rent in the case of children as of adults, *Billson* 4075–4077. 4127, 4128; *Ratcliffe* 6174–6178; *Allen* 6956; *Street* 8258——Reasons for the rent being so high as 1 *s.* at Leicester, Hinckley, &c., *Ratcliffe* 6404–6413.

2. Different Rent for Frames of different Sizes:

Explanation of the weekly charge to which the workman is subject in the case of different sized frames, *J. Elliott* 1756. 1758——Varying amount of the charge for frame rent, according to localities, and the description of the work, *Winters* 4838——Different amounts of rent charged by witness for different sized frames, *Ratcliffe* 6150–6153——Amount of rent paid by witness, who lives near Hinckley, on the several frames held by him, *Bray* 9491. 9496.

3. Practice as to the Charge in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire:

Custom in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire with regard to the amount of frame-rent, the charge being 9 *d.* a week for narrow frames under thirty gauge, and 1 *s.* a week on and above thirty gauge, *Morley* 6515–6518. 6574–6576. 6711–6714; *Allen* 6936–6938. 6941; *Street* 7238–7242——Want of analogy between the amount of frame-rent in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, the frames in the latter county not requiring much repair, *Morley* 6581–6583——The frame-rent has always been the same in Nottinghamshire, *ib.* 6711–6714——The rent of 9 *d.* a week for coarse frames, and 1 *s.* a week for thirty-gauge frames and upwards has been invariable, *Allen* 6936–6938. 6941; *Heard* 7074–7076; *Street* 7238–7242; *B. Elliott* 7405–7409——Additional frame in the cases of the wide frames adverted to, *Heard* 7077–7079.

II. *Disapproval generally of Frame-rent:*

1. Objections to the Principle of Rent for Frames:

Evils of relying upon frame-rent as an important source of profit, *Mitchell* 25 *et seq.*, 170–173——Considerable evil to the trade, even though exorbitant rents be exceptional, *ib.* 163–166. 345——The signature of witness to a petition in 1854, which designated frame-rents and other charges as arbitrary and uncertain, and, in many instances, of excessive amount, was intended to apply to frame-rents only, *ib.* 344, 345.

Designation of the frame-rent system as the cancer in the trade, and as extremely oppressive and injurious in its effects, *Biggs* 370 *et seq.*, 422, 423——Reference to the opinion of a manufacturer thirty years ago as to the means of correcting the evils of frame-rent, *ib.* 406——It is possible, but impracticable, to remove the evil by buying up (for about 50,000*l.*) all the old frames, *ib.* 406. 437——Absence of parallel between frame "rent" (so called), and rent for chambers, cottages, or farms, *ib.* 506–510. 687–693.

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FRAME RENTS—continued.

II. *Disapproval generally of Frame-rent*—continued.

1. Objections to the Principle of Rent for Frames—*continued.*

693. 728-731. 776, 777——The profit of the manufacturer depends upon the nerve with which he can employ his frames unjustly, *Biggs* 537, 538. 547——It is only by the employment of new machines and skilled labour that firms which abolish frame-rents can conduct their business with profit, *ib.* 548, 549.

The excess of employment and of produce is altogether unsound in principle, and results entirely from the frame rental, *Biggs* 553-557. 619, 620——The frames would soon fall into disuse if there were no rental, or, more justly speaking, if there were no profits on the tool, *ib.* 625-627——The term "rent" is altogether a misnomer, *ib.* 625. 693——Use of the frames for the sake of profit on the tool out of the wages of the labourer, rather than on the produce, *ib.* 633-637——Effect of the rent system in lowering wages, and depreciating the condition of the framework-knitters, *Briggs* 640-642. 680, 681; *Cummings* 937-943. 965-977——Frame-rent is as unjust in principle as would be an uniform weekly rent upon a plough or harrow, whether available for the week or not, *Biggs* 719-722.

Main evil, in the present system, of manufacturers and middlemen being enabled to let or sub-let frames at a direct and exorbitant profit on the tool, irrespectively of profit on the produce, *Cummings* 1105-1116. 1122-1125——Preference on the part of the idle and the worst hands for the rent system, *Collins* 1226-1229——Complaint that the first earnings of the operative at the frame are not his own, *Buckby* 1560, 1561. 1577-1580——Absence of analogy of frame-rent and of house-rent, *J. Elliott* 1731-1741, 1752, 1753; *Winters* 4959.

Witness considers that frame-rent is unsound in principle, and an illegitimate source of profit, *Muggeridge* 2592 *et seq.*——Belief that frame-rent, while it is a great injury to the workman, is no benefit to the manufacturer, *ib.* 2593——Unsuitableness of the term "rent" as applied to stoppages for the use of frames, *ib.* 2745——Witness cannot see any necessity for the rent system, and the nominal and real rate of wages under it, *Sketchley* 3837——Prejudice to the workmen in the inducement to the hosier to employ his frames for the sake of profit on the tool and not on the produce, *Mead* 4733-4738. 4754-4759. 4762-4764.

Sundry evils to the workmen and the trade consequent on the system of frame-rent, or profit on the tool apart from the produce, *Winters* 4846 *et seq.*——Agreement that the frame-rent system, by checking the introduction of improved machinery, and by glutting the market in times of depression, prevents the trade from progressing, and is a direct injury to the export trade, *ib.* 4854-4880——Illustration intended to show the effect of the frame-rent in lowering the earnings of the operative, *ib.* 4881-4890——Denial that under the rent system there is any real contract between the parties, *ib.* 4883——Interest of the frame-holder to employ the frames when there is no demand for the produce, *ib.* 4891-4898. 4965——The frame-rent was complained against in 1849, but without effect, *Emmerson* 7869-7872——Exception taken to the term "rent," *Briggs* 8385. 8388.

2. Large Profits actually made, objected to:

Opinion that 9*d.* out of the shilling is profit, *Mitchell* 113, 114——Statement as to the amount of rent not being regulated by the value of the machine, or the amount of work performed by it, *ib.* 153-162——The frame-rent, which is now 1*s.* a week, was formerly only 9*d.* a week, whilst also the value of the frame was 14*l.* or 15*l.*, and still wages were higher, *ib.* 153-160. 209. 294-308. 346-349. 355, 356——The charges for frame rent amount to about 10 per cent. of the wages, *ib.* 358. 361.

Comparison, five frames being taken for the calculation, of the operation of the rent system, and of the net or poundage system, *Biggs* 544-547. 576-616. 829——Profit of 4¼ per cent. on the produce through the means of the frame-rent, and of 1 per cent. under the poundage system, according to witness's illustration, *ib.* 546. 576. 580. 674-681. 829——Statement that the interest of capital invested in narrow frames is covered by the interest accruing from the rent received, *ib.* 576-580. 829——Calculation showing the immense return, over a course of years, for five frames costing 5*l.* each, *ib.* 580-616. 829——Illustration showing that the deduction of 1*s.* has not the least reference to the amount of work performed, *ib.* 620.

Less rent for frames formerly, when their cost was much more than it now is, *Cummings* 935, 936——Concurrence in the statement of Mr. Biggs as to the cost of frames and repairs, and the profit accruing from the rent, *Cummings* 1005, 1006; *Collins* 1321-1324——The operatives by no means object to the manufacturer making a fair profit upon his outlay in machinery, *Buckby* 1505-1507——Circumstance of witness having in three years paid 22*l.* 10*s.* in rent for a frame which cost the middleman only 2*l.* 15*s.*, *ib.* 1530-1535——Direct profit derived by the hosier from frame-rent during periods of slackness, when hosiery is not in demand, *ib.* 1607-1609. 1614, 1615——Benefit to the operative if there were no frame-rents, *Butcher* 1835. 1862, 1863. 1879, 1880.

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2. Large Profits actually made objected to—*continued.*

Extract from witness's report in 1845, shewing in special cases the very large amount accruing from frame rent, in proportion to the value of the frame, *Muggeridge* 2577-2588——Immense per-centage of profit from rent on a lot of 400 frames, sold several years ago under a bankruptcy in Leicester, *ib.* 2588, 2589——Calculation showing, at the end of twenty years, a profit of 3,000 *l.* on 100 frames, representing a capital of 400 *l.*, *Sketchley* 3838-3847——Argument, founded on the decrease in the value of frames and in the price of goods, that workmen should not pay more than half the amount of frame rent which they formerly paid, *ib.* 3924-3933.

Reference to a paper showing what may be realised by a two-hose frame in twenty years, *Grimes* 3969——Large amount of rent formerly paid by witness for a frame worked by him, *Winters* 4974-4977——Increase since 1816 in the rent for coarse gauge frames, *Newstead* 5629. 5631.

The frame rent was not a grievance fifty years ago, but the rent has been increased since then, *Nicholson* 8856-8858——Arrangements in 1825 for increasing both frame rent and prices; in the meantime wages or prices have fallen, but the rent has continued at the advance, *ib.* 8859-8869——Reference to frame rent as being too high in proportion to the value of the frames, *Sanderson* 9268. 9275-9280——Instance of a frame which cost the owner but 1 *l.*, and for which 9 *d.* a week rent was paid by the same workman for ten or eleven years, *Mason* 9604. 9629-9633——Occasional instances of frames returning enormous profits, *ib.* 9634, 9635.

Expenses of five frames during a period of fifteen years, with the amount of frame rents; profit of ten per cent. upon capital shown hereby, *App. p.* 597——Enormous profit on 100 frames in twenty years, according to a paper delivered in by J. Sketchley, *ib.* 599.

III. *Defence of the present System:*

1. Approval of the principle of Frame Rent:

Propriety of the manufacturer receiving a profit or return for the capital involved in his frames, *Butcher* 1836-1839. 1861——Justification of a profit upon the frames beyond the interest of the investment, *Walker* 2200-2204——In flat times witness would not employ a single frame unless for the interest in the machinery, *Corah* 3272——Objection to the rent being treated as a debt rather than as a stoppage, *ib.* 3320-3331——Equal right of witness to bargain for the stoppage of frame rent as for a landowner to bargain for the stoppage of land rent, *ib.* 3322-3334——Simplicity of the mode of payment under the rent system, *ib.* 3509.

Absence of complaint on the part of witness's workmen against the rent system, which the factory operatives prefer to a net system, *Billson* 3984-3994. 4011, 4012——Doubt whether there is any extortion at all, even in times of depression, under the system of frame rent, *ib.* 4160-4172. 4184-4193. 4200-4203——Analogy between house rent and frame rent, *Stone* 6084, 6085.

Witness makes no deduction save frame rent, which he considers legitimate, and which has been charged for generations, *Ratcliffe* 6149. 6244——Equity of the rent system if not abused, *ib.* 6179-6183——Defence of the principle of frame rent as a means of profit; denial that it causes special depression in the trade, *Morley* 6603. 6608-6620——Belief that no respectable hosier would employ frames without reference to profit on the produce, *ib.* 6667, 6668. 6724. 6777——Argument that the cost or selling value of frames should no more be considered in regard to the amount of the rent than should the value of land or houses, as in regard to the rent for which they may be let, *ib.* 6900-6920.

The amount of the rent is perfectly understood by the workmen, *Allen*, 6941——In purchasing frames, witness never did so for the sake of the rent, *Heard* 7080, 7081——Unfairness to frame-owners if rent be abolished, *ib.* 7152——Legitimacy of a direct profit on frames, *M'Callum* 9890-9902. 9981-9987.

2. Denial that the Profits are at all exorbitant:

Evidence to the effect that the profits on frames are not exorbitant; erroneous calculations of Mr. Biggs and Mr. Collins hereon, *Walker* 2092-2111. 2255-2259. 2264-2268. 2295-2303——No greater profit on frames at present than formerly, on account of the more repairs required, *ib.* 2148, 2149——Witness considers ten per cent. a fair average profit, *ib.* 2257——Amended calculation in the case of the five frames adduced by Mr. Biggs; considerably less profit assumed by witness, *ib.* 2303.

Denial that frames pay the enormous profit which has been stated by some witnesses, *Baines* 2477-2482. 2499-2516; *Morley* 6602-6607. 6613-6620. 6776, 6777——Details relative to the cost prices, repairs, &c., of witness's narrow frames over a period of fifteen years, *Corah* 3026-3088——Deduction that during the fifteen years each frame produces 16 *s.* a week rent, or a profit of ten per cent., *ib.* 3085-3093. 3127-3133. 3570——Explanation of the mode in which the above calculation was made, *ib.* 3089-3093. 3137—3140—— Impossibility of the Committee arriving at a proper conclusion as to the

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Frame Rents—III. *Defence of the present System*—continued.

2. Denial that the Profits are at all exorbitant—*continued.*

cost, repairs, and profit of witness's frames from an examination of his books; experience on which witness has stated the cost of repairs and profit, *Corah* 3554-3570.

Equity of the charge of 1 *s.* a week for frame rent; denial that such charge produces large profits on the frames, *Biltson* 4113. 4204-4207. 4221-4226. 4235-4255. 4264-4266——The occasional non-employment of frames, and the reduction in their value have combined to render them not remunerative, *ib.* 4237-4252——Calculation, and examination thereon, to the effect that witness's frame rents do not pay him five per cent. on the capital invested, *Ratcliffe* 6202-6241——Statement that in Nottinghamshire the profit upon frames is not more than five per cent. on capital over and above five per cent. for interest, *Allen* 6975-6980——As regards frame rent in Nottingham, there is no undue profit made by it, *Heard* 7129-7136——Statement that new frames of 32-gauge, 31 inches, which cost 31 *l.* each, produce a return of about 14 *s.* 3 *d.* per annum over five per cent., *ib.* 7390-7392.

Return of not more than 4½ per cent. on the frames under witness's superintendence; inference therefrom, *Street* 7325-7327——Slight profit or return derivable from frames adverted to as being no inducement to middlemen or bagmen to enter into the trade, *B. Elliott,* 7508-7523——Particulars relative to the return (7¼ per cent.) upon the capital (13,766 *l.* 18 *s.* 3 *d.*) invested by Messrs. Ward & Co. in machinery; insufficiency of the same, *M'Callum* 9872-9919——Witness considers the return not sufficient, inasmuch as depreciation of the machinery is not allowed for, *ib.* 9882-9916.

IV. *Conclusions of the Committee in condemnation of Profit from Frames, and in favour of the Abolition of Frame Rent:*

The stoppages from wages almost universally made under the claim of weekly rent for frames, the property of the employers, manufacturers, or middlemen, bears no fixed proportion to the value of the machine, varying in different districts, and has increased in Leicestershire, concurrently with an abatement of wages and a diminished selling price of the machine, *Rep. p.* iv.

A profit is obtained from the frame-rent system to the diminution of wages out of the scanty proceeds of the manufacture, apart from and beyond the ordinary source of manufacturing profit arising from the sale of goods, *Rep. p.* iv.

The profit thus obtained from frame rent perpetuates the use of imperfect and inferior machinery for the sake of such rent, *Rep. p.* iv.

An indirect profit accruing to the employers of manufactering labour, beside and beyond the profit arising from the sale of goods, is recognised in no other manufacture, *Rep. p.* iv.

The profit from frame rents is an abuse such as was intended by the Legislature to be guarded against in the Truck Act, 1 & 2 Will. 4, c. 37, which forbids the payment of wages otherwise than in the current coin of the realm, *Rep. p.* iv.

Recommendation for abolishing the rent by Act of Parliament, analagous to the Act 1 & 2 Will. 4, c. 37, *Rep. p.* iv.

See also *Agitation and Complaint. Alteration of Frames. Biggs, William,* M.P., *Chawner* v. *Cummings. Children. Commission of* 1844. *Cost or Value of Frames. Custom. Depression. Employment. Factory Act. Hand Looms. Hinckley. Imposition (use of Frames). Improved Machinery. Independent Frames. Labour. Legislative Interference. Loughborough. Narrow Frames. Net Wages. Oppression. Petitions. Relations between Employer and Employed. Rent and Charges. Repairs of Frames. Short Work, or Stints. Sickness. Slow Hands. Still Frames. Strikes. Truck. Unskilled Labour. Wide Frames. Workmen.*

Frame-Smiths. Frame-smiths willingly let frames at 5 *d.* or 6 *d.* a week, to be paid for only when employed, *Biggs* 615. 633-635. 733——The abolition of stoppages for frame rent would not prevent frame-smiths from hiring out their frames, *Cummings* 1007.

See also *Independent Frames. Sub-letting of Frames.*

Framework-Knitters. See *Workmen.*

Fraud. Facilities for fraud in the system of stoppages, *Buckby* 1591——Respect in which the system of frame rent and charges has a fraudulent character, *Winters* 5102. 5106-5108——Fraud if the middleman charge a different price to the workman from what he receives at the warehouse, *Morley* 6661-6663.

See also *Embezzlement of Material. Imposition (use of Frames).*

Freer, Joseph. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Framework-knitter in the cap branch, at Blaby, near Leicester; acts as undertaker in the case of six frames belonging to Mr. Robert Walker, 9016-9027——Invariable practice of Mr. Walker not to take rent during sickness,

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sickness, 9027–9032. 9062——Feeling of workmen at Blaby, &c., in regard to the system of frame rents, 9033–9036. 9153–9160——Apprehension that if rent and charges were abolished, earnings would if anything be lower than at present, 9037–9045. 9084–9108. 9150–9152——Charge of only 3 *d.* a frame by witness for fetching the yarn from Leicester and sending in the work by carrier, 9046–9052.

The abolition of middlemen's charges would not be a benefit to the workman, 9055–9061——Custom of Mr. Robert Walker not to take full rent for short work, 9063, 9064 Witness has not heard any complaint in Blaby of short work and full rent, 9065. 9075–9079——Ground for complaint if full rent be taken for short work, or in case of sickness, 9066–9068——The caps made by witness are a fancy article, and require to be made on narrow frames, 9071–9074——There are about 300 frames in Blaby, 9075.

Particulars as to the earnings of witness and his hands in making caps, 9080–9085. 9109–9141——Injury to the quick and industrious workmen and benefit to the slow hands if a net system were adopted, 9094–9108——Out of 300 operatives there are about 100 in the cap and shirt branch, 9116–9119. 9142–9147——Number of hours for which witness is at work, 9121–9136.

Reference to the allotment held by witness; strong approval of allotments generally, 9125. 9127–9136. 9179–9203——Portion of witness's time devoted to the cultivation of his allotment, 9125. 9127–9136.

The cap trade at Blaby has not varied much of late years, 9137——There are a few wide frames in Blaby, 9148, 9149——Effect of the increase of wide machinery in injuring the trade, and depressing the operatives, 9161–9175——Witness attributes the depression in the hosiery trade to improved machinery, which should, if possible, be stopped by Parliament, 9167, 9168——Gradual decrease in the number of narrow frames, 9206, 9207.

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Garrett, Joseph (*Hinckley*). Oppressive character of the frame rent; stoppage from the earnings of this operative, *Sketchley* 3741–3743.

Ginns, John. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Framework-knitter at Hinckley, 3942, 3943——Concurs generally in the evidence of the witness Sketchley, 3944, 3945——Custom at Hinckley to take frame rent when the operative is ill; case in illustration, 3946–3951——Universal feeling of the Hinckley workmen in favour of abolishing stoppages, 3952. 3959. 3971–3973——Full rent paid by witness in case of short work issued to him, 3952——Complete dependence of the framework-knitter on the hosier, 3953–3955. 3967, 3968——Decline for many years in the wrought-hose trade of Hinckley, and in wages, partly through the introduction of improved machinery, 3956–3968——Reference to a paper showing what may be realised by a two-hose frame in twenty years, 3969.

Gloves. Paper delivered in, being a statement of prices, upon the net system, agreed to by the trade some years ago in the case of Lisle thread gloves, *Buckby* 1457, 1458——Greater facility afforded by narrow frames than by wide frames for the manufacture of gloves, *ib.* 1657–1663——Average earnings of from 12 *s.* to 14 *s.* a week by operatives in the glove branch, *Richmond* 5260–5267. 5274, 5275——Difference in the weekly rent for narrow frames in the wrought-hose branch, as compared with the glove branch, *ib.* 5280–5282.

Amount of rent, middleman's charges, and other expenses attending the glove and other fancy frames, *App. p.* 569——Total earnings and deductions of four glove hands while upon a stint of employment, *ib.* 571——Amount earned by the same hands upon the net principle, after a deduction of 2 ¼ *d.* per shilling, *ib.*——Gross earnings of twelve fair average hands in the glove trade, showing the deductions, the net earnings, and the weekly average, *ib.* 573.

Good, Mr. Statement of the gross earnings of twelve hands who worked to Mr. Good, to the firm of Messrs. T. & W. Biggs, showing also the deductions, the net earnings, and the weekly average, *App. p.* 572.

Goodman, ——. With regard to the case of a widow named Goodman, who died in March last, witness does not recollect having stopped seven weeks' frame rent from her earnings, nor having been told at the time that she was ill for the seven weeks for which the rent was stopped, *Corah* 3483–3497.

Witness is daughter of James Goodman, framework-knitter at Leicester, who died about twelve months ago, *Stevens* 5181–5190——Witness's mother, who died recently, worked at a frame belonging to Mr. Corah, *ib.* 5191–5193——Witness took to Mr. Corah's warehouse the work done by her mother during the five or six weeks, out of the

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seven weeks preceding her death, no work having been done during the last week, *Stevens* 5193–5203. 5228——Particulars as to Mr. Corah having deducted seven weeks' frame rent, besides many stoppages for short stuff, although witness told him that the frame had not been used during the illness of her mother on the week preceding her death, *ib.* 5203–5238.

Further statement, and examination thereon, with reference to a charge against witness of exacting frame rent from a woman named Goodman during a period of illness preceding her death, *Corah* 7348–7386——The fact of the illness was not mentioned to witness by Mary Stevens, the person who brought in Mrs. Goodman's work, or he would not have charged the rent; inaccurate evidence of the witness Stevens hereon, *ib.* 7350–7355. 7362–7366. 7372–7385——The money deducted by mistake was recently sent to Mary Stevens; explanation as to its not having been sent till the day preceding that on which she appeared before the Committee, *ib.* 7350. 7356–7361. 7367–7371——Circumstance of witness having remitted thirty-two weeks' rent to Mrs. Goodman over a period involving 106 weeks' rent, *ib.* 7357. 7385.

Grant, Alice. Earnings of Alice Grant, employed by witness; she does not work on Monday, *Loveday* 4381–4394.

Greaves, Thomas. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Framework-knitter at Derby; works his own frames, 8035–8037——Practice of Mr. Pope, of Derby, when a middleman, to charge full rent, &c., in cases of sickness, 8038–8045——Practice also to take full rent and charges when partial work was given out, 8046, 8047——Practice of Mr. Collard, formerly middleman at Derby, to deduct full rent and charges in cases of sickness, and in times of partial employment, 8047–8051.

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Hinckley (Leicester):

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2. *Distressed Condition of the Operatives.*
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1. *Practice in regard to Frame Rent and Charges:*

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heavy, being 2 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound for the last quarter, and the poorhouse is crowded, *Mead* 4611-4617——Witness has lived in several parts of Leicestershire, but never saw any place so depressed as Hinckley, *ib.* 4690, 4691. 4714-4716.——The population is about 6,000, having decreased since the last census, *ib.* 4693, 4694.

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Statement of the average gross earnings, with the customary deductions, of persons belonging to the common wrought-hose branch in April 1855, *App. p.* 599.

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3. *Cause of the Depression considered:*

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Occasional practice at Hinckley of not giving out work in holiday seasons, and of charging the full rent nevertheless, *Sketchley* 3718-3734——Habit of keeping Monday as a holiday induced by the practice of giving out short work, *Winters* 4850. 4851——Explanation as to witness giving out work at Hinckley in Whitsun week and taking full rent, *Payne* 5894-5896.

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Hours of Labour. The operatives out of factory work generally from ten to twelve hours for about four days in the week, or about forty-eight hours weekly, *Walker* 2136–2147——Work for ten hours daily in factories, besides two hours for meals, *ib.* 2138——Difficulty as regards regular attendance in factories, except in steam factories, *Baines* 2416–2420. 2426–2437——Very irregular and short attendance at a shop belonging to witness, in which he had several circular frames, *Payne* 5759–5782.

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Imposition (*use of Frames*). Check upon the improper use of country frames if used on the net system, *Cummings,* 957, 958. 1171–1179; *J. Elliott,* 1675——Inadequate control on the part of the manufacturer as to the use of his frames by the workman when trade is good, *Butcher* 1807–1811——Absence of control over the use of frames which are not in factories if rent were abolished, *Walker* 2204. 2214–2220. 2309–2313; *Baines,* 2517; *Corah,* 3510; *Billson,* 4128. 4232; *Loveday,* 4312–4317; *Hackett,* 4585–4589; *Payne,* 6007–6009; *Ratcliffe,* 6199–6201; *Turner,* 6474; *M'Callum,* 9818–9820——Witness does agree with the Leicestershire hosiers that the mode of disposal of the frames would be at the control of the workmen if the rent were abolished, *Muggeridge* 2850, 2851.

Equal security under a net system as at present against the frames being used improperly, *Newstead* 5738–5748——Imposition now practised by some middlemen upon the manufacturers in regard to the use of their frames, and the appropriation of the rent, *ib.* 5742–5748——Opportunity of the workmen to defraud the middlemen if stoppages were abolished, *Ratcliffe,* 6273——Witness's men, who are never short worked, are not allowed to work his frames for others, *ib.* 6379——If frame rent as a stoppage from wages were abolished, the frame-owner would have no means of obtaining or recovering any return for the use of his frames or his capital, *Morley* 6557. 6559. 6560. 6570–6573——Fraud practised by some men holding frames of their own, *B. Elliott,* 8009, 8010.

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Improved Machinery. Effect of the frame rent in retarding the introduction of improved machinery, *Biggs,* 372. 378, 379. 514, 515; *Cummings,* 1121——Doubt as to the better class of wrought hose being superseded by goods made by wide frames or improved machinery, *Biggs,* 622, 623. 674. 750, 751; *Winters,* 4931–4940; *Morley,* 6921–6925; *Allen,* 7002–7005; *B. Elliott,* 7569–7574——Statement by the Commissioner of 1844 as to the improbability of the manufacturers substituting machinery for the frame system, *Biggs* 650——Effect of the increase of wide or improved machinery in depressing the condition of operatives still employed on the narrow frames, *Abbott* 1973, 1974; *Corah,* 3586; *Ratcliffe,* 6242, 6243; *Nicholson,* 8734, 8735. 8757, 8758; *Freer,* 9161–9175; *Mason,* 9726–9737.

Anticipation that the narrow frames and domestic manufacture will be superseded in course of time by improved machinery without the necessity of intervention by Act of Parliament, *Walker* 2196–2199; *Corah* 3260. 3262, 3263. 3269, 3270. 3645–3656; *Loveday* 4488; *Street* 7278–7315——Particulars relative to the improved machinery used by witness; quality of the goods produced thereby, *Corah* 3259–3263——Weekly produce respectively of the best frames and of the narrow frames, *ib.* 3340–3344——Statement showing that by the wide frames, costing 120 *l.* each, and worked by steam, stockings may be produced for 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a dozen, which under the narrow-frame system cost 3 *s.* 9 *d.* a dozen, the former article being moreover the better of the two, *ib.* 3251–3256. 3258. 3339. 3363, 3634–3671——Superior class of machinery employed by witness's firm, *Billson* 3990, 3991——Slight difference in work or quality between stockings made by Mr. Corah's improved machinery for 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a dozen and stockings which by the narrow frames cost 3 *s.* 9 *d.* a dozen; doubt, nevertheless, whether steam machinery will quickly supersede the narrow frames, *ib.* 4090–4110. 4227, 4228.

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Independent Frames:

1. *Practice as to their Employment by Manufacturers.*
2. *Slight extent to which possessed by the Workmen.*
3. *As possessed by Persons unconnected with the Trade.*
4. *Probable effect of a System of Net Wages.*
5. *How far desirable that Workmen should own Frames.*

1. *Practice as to their Employment by Manufacturers:*

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A system of net wages would probably induce workmen to have frames of their own, *Cummings* 1131——No advantage to a workman to own a frame if rent were abolished, *Baines* 2485–2496——Check upon abuse in the case of frames belonging to middlemen, tradesmen, &c., if rents were abolished, *Cummings* 1062–1065——Statement by a workman in which witness concurs, as to the benefits to result from the compulsory abolition of frame rents and charges, more especially by the independent frames thereby being thrown out of the market, *Emmerson* 7904–7920. 7939–7948——Witness cannot say whose property the independent frames would become if frame rent were abolished, *ib.* 7914–7920. 7965–7968——Increase of independent frames and of bagmen if frame rent were abolished, *B. Elliott* 8020–8023.

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1. *Approval of an Act of Parliament for the Abolition of Frame Rent, or of Frame Rent and Charges.*
2. *Evidence in Disapproval.*
3. *Documents laid before the Committee in elucidation of each side of the Question.*

1. *Approval of an Act of Parliament for the Abolition of Frame Rent, or of Frame Rent and Charges:*

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Though the operatives do not wish for legislative interference with the rate of wages, they anticipate considerable protection from the Act, which, though it may not improve their wages, will still abolish stoppages and prevent fraud, *Buckby* 1569-1582. 1590-1600——Difficulty of enforcing by Act the abolition generally of frame rents, *Butcher* 1791-1796. 1822. 1873——Approval of an Act to abolish frame rent, if such Act can be rendered operative, *ib.* 1862, 1863. 1870-1880.

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3. *Documents laid before the Committee in elucidation of each side of the Question:*

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Amount expended for the relief of the poor, in the several parishes of Leicester, in the years ended Lady-day 1847 and 1848; the total amount being 20,223 *l.* 7 *s.* in 1847, and 33,048 *l.* 12 *s.* in 1848; *App. p.* 615.

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Middlemen:

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3. *How far desirable that they be paid by the Manufacturers.*
4. *How far there is a Check upon their making undue Exactions.*
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6. *Under a System of Net Wages to the Workmen.*

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3. *How far desirable that they be paid by the Manufacturers*—continued.

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5. *How far their Practices generally are complained against or defended*—continued.

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2. *Instances of the adoption of net Wages, or of a Poundage System, and Results thereof.*
3. *Arguments opposed to the adoption of a Net or Poundage system.*

1. *Advocacy of a Net System, in lieu of the System of Rent and Charges:*

Evidence generally in favour of the compulsory abolition of frame rents, or of frame rents and charges, *Mitchell* 40-43. 70–89. 117–125. 167–179. 188–201. 216–224. 278–290. 330–345, 350–361; *Biggs* 379 *et seq.*; *Collins* 1221 *et seq.*; *Buckby* 1491–1496. 1522, 1523. 1560; *J. Elliott* 1774–1780; *Muggeridge* 2773, 2774; *Abbott* 1990–1992. 2045, 2046; *Mead* 4702 *et seq.*; *Winters* 4899 *et seq.*; *Richmond* 5248 *et seq*——Probable effect of the abolition of frame rents upon the wages of the workmen, *Mitchell* 250–254. 284–290. 335–343. 350–354. 357–361——Witness would, if possible, continue to pay the workmen the same wages as at present if the rents were abolished, and to pay them net, *ib.* 337–339. 350–354. 357——Probable amount of justifiable suffering for a period, if frame rent be abolished, *Biggs* 379. 419——Advantage to manufacturers, as well as to workmen, if net wages be insisted on by law, *Biggs* 383–387. 430, 431; *J. Buckby* 1473–1475; *J. Elliott* 1771. 1774–1780; *Muggeridge* 2736; *Briggs* 8385. 8387.

Probability of the proposed Act tending permanently to increase the workman's earnings, *Biggs* 789–793——Operation of the rent system in providing small earnings for a great many, and of the net system in giving more wages to a few, *Cummings* 991–995——Respects in which deductions would probably not take place if frame rents were abolished, *ib.* 1041–1048——Though the adoption of a net system would not necessarily guarantee an increase of wages, and would check the employment of women and children, witness still contends for the advantages of such system to workmen and their families, *ib.* 1148–1159. 1165. 1169. 1191–1194——Belief that if the net system were fairly tried, neither manufacturers nor men would ever wish to abandon it, *ib.* 1108——Better price for labour under a net system in factories, *Collins* 1336. 1360–1369. 1371. 1386–1419.

Insufficiency of the proposition of Mr. Biggs for abolishing frame rent only; there should be no stoppages at all, *Buckby* 1491–1496. 1522, 1523. 1560. 1562–1567; *Elliott* 1730——Facility for fixing a net money payment in lieu of the present system, *J. Elliott* 1758, 1759; *Muggeridge* 2771, 2772; *Richmond* 5318-5321——Means by which the manufacturer might compensate himself for the loss of frame rent, *Butcher* 1826–1832. 1859–1861. 1869. 1872——About 970 out of nearly 1,000 workmen in Hinckley are in favour of net wages, *Sketchley* 3797. 3856——Though a net system may not increase the earnings of the more able hands, it is desirable chiefly for the sake of those who are infirm or disabled by sickness, &c., *ib.* 3807–3815. 3922, 3923.

Means for adopting a regulated scale of wages on the net system, *Sketchley* 3848–3855. 3923; *Winters* 4924–4926. 4953–4956——The workmen do not want any interference with the principles which regulate wages, but want to receive what they earn without deductions, *Sketchley* 3859–3862. 3915–3923. 3937——Improbability of the manufacturers generally adopting a system of net wages, *ib.* 3863–3866. 3875–3880; *Winters* 4941–4943——The net system to be satisfactory must be general and uniform, *Sketchley* 3939, 3940——Universal feeling of the Hinckley workmen in favour of abolishing stoppages, *Ginns* 3952. 3959. 3971–3973——The less able hands might, in times of depression, be thrown out of employment and partly on the poor-rates, but the able-bodied would earn better wages, and the condition of all would, after a season, be greatly improved, *Mead* 4703–4713. 4723–4732—— Necessity of the contemplated Act of Parliament in order to prevent unprincipled employers taking unfair advantage of their workmen, *Brown* 4826–4830.

Argument that the adoption of a net system would raise the earnings of the operatives, and that families would be benefited rather than injured if some of the members,

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women and children, were thrown out of employment, *Winters* 4900–4923——The same amount of work would be done in a family, but it would be done on fewer frames, *ib.* 4900–4923——Heads of families would have more work and would earn more under a net system, and the children, &c., would have a chance of other employment, *ib.* 4906–4923——The same amount would still be earned in families under a net system though so many persons might not be employed, *ib.* 5082. 5088. 5147–5159; *Newstead* 5725——Respect in which the earnings of families would be bettered by the proposed legislation, which is not however advocated for the sake of regulating wages, *Winters* 5088 *et seq.* 5143 *et seq.*

Examination as to the mode of calculation to be pursued in fixing the rate of payment to be made in the event of the abolition of all stoppages, *Richmond* 5325–5343. 5436–5446. 5450–5456. 5497–5500——More independent position of the men under a net system, *ib.* 5389, 5390. 5420–5423——Grounds for the opinion that the net system tends to raise the amount of earnings, *ib.* 5433–5435. 5458–5482. 5501–5508; *Newstead* 5722, 5723——Witness merely wishes that whatever a man earns he should receive without being subject to excessive charges, *Richmond* 5459–5464. 5498.

Grounds upon which the Leicester operatives think they would be better off if rent and charges were abolished, *Newstead* 5649–5659——Feeling of the operatives at Arnold, &c., against the rent and charges system as involving deductions which, under a net system, would not be taken into account; concurrence of witness in this view of the net system, *Emmerson* 7717 *et seq.* 7840, 7841. 7876 *et seq.*——Examination as to the grounds upon which witness considers that there would be less pressure upon the operatives in times of depression, and that his earnings would, on the whole, be better if net wages were enforced by the legislature, *Emmerson* 7921–7964; *Greaves* 8144 *et seq.*——A scale of prices for a net system might be settled at a meeting to be held by all interested, *ib.* 8205. 8222–8224. 8283, 8284.

If there were no frame rent, as advocated by witness, the use of the frames should be compensated for on the principles adopted by other trades under analogous circumstances, *Briggs* 8360, 8361. 8385. 8390–8395——Less wages would be paid per dozen for any goods when the frame belonged to the employer, *ib.* 8390–8395——If the workman owned the frame higher wages would then be paid, 8390–8395——Two prices would be created if there were no stoppages, upon the same principle as there are two prices in all trades; approval thereof, *ib.* 8393–8395. 8554–8557. 8564–8574——Approval of a net or poundage system as more conducive to the welfare of the operative than the present system, *Bray* 9559–9573——Grounds upon which some workmen are in favour of a net system, *Mason* 9619–9621. 9662–9664.

Suggestions of the framework-knitters in order to secure the payment of net wages, *App. p.* 568.

Recommendation by the Committee in favour of the compulsory prohibition of stoppages from wages, *Rep. p.* iv.

2. *Instances of the adoption of Net Wages, or of a Poundage System, and Results thereof:*

Explanation as to the operation of a system of net wages, as adopted by witness in his factory, *Mitchell* 81–85. 185, 186. 329——Reasons for not adopting a system of net wages in the case of old-fashioned frames in factories, or of frames employed out of doors, *ib.* 87–90. 180–192. 216, 217. 278–280.

Illustration of the operation of the rent system, as against the net or poundage system, showing the great advantage of the latter to the workmen, *Biggs* 378, 379. 476–496——Some undertakers and manufacturers in Leicester have adopted the net system without any difficulty, *ib.* 393. 416–418. 459–470——Reference to Mr. Cummings's middlemen, as having bought frames from witness, and having adopted a system of net wages to the satisfaction of the workmen, *ib.* 522–527. 633–635.

Witness has worked for eight or nine years entirely on a net system, and makes no stoppages whatever, *Cummings* 841–843. 853–866. 879. 959–962——Considerable satisfaction given to the workmen by the net system, *ib.* 844, 845. 866. 880–883. 972. 978——Mention of several firms in Leicester, about one eighth of the trade, who work on the net system, *ib.* 884–889——Instances of manufacturers having adopted the net system and gone back to the rent and charges system; return of Mr. Collins to the old system adverted to, *ib.* 979–990. 996, 997——Further reference to the net system adopted by witness, under which there is a deduction of 2½*d.* in the shilling from the gross earnings, there being in fact no charge when the frame is not used, *ib.* 1033–1038. 1066–1076——Extent to which the net system is on the increase, *ib.* 1186–1190.

Adoption of the net system of wages in witness's factory, *Collins* 1207. 1210. 1215. 1217——Optional system adopted by witness as regards the domestic manufacture, some workmen preferring the net system, and some, who are the larger number and the best hands

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NET WAGES—2. *Instances of the adoption of Net Wages, &c.*—continned.

hands, preferring the rent system, *Collins* 1208–1234. 1242–1260——Deduction of 2½ *d.* in the shilling under the net system, *ib.* 1212–1214——Decided preference given by witness to the net system, *ib.* 1221–1229. 1256, 1257——Considerable satisfaction of the workmen with the net system, which is a boon mainly to the industrious man, *ib.* 1221. 1223–1225. 1229–1235. 1256–1260——Witness has frequently altered from one system to another in order to please his men, but intends henceforth to abide by the net system, *ib.* 1242–1257——Comparison of the system of gross wages with that of net wages, showing the great advantage of the latter to the workman, *ib.* 1404–1419.

Net system of wages under which witness has recently worked, *Buckby* 1427 —— Reference to several hosiers who, contrary to the general rule, have adopted the system of net wages, *ib.* 1452–1454——Experience of witness as to the net system, *ib.* 1455—— It is very simple and plain, *ib.* 1456.

Reference to and explanation upon a paper (which witness delivers in), being a statement of net contracts and charges in regard to the glove branch, as agreed to some eight or nine years ago by the manufacturers and middlemen on the one part, and the workmen on the other part, *Buckby* 1457–1461——Explanation as to the discontinuance, after a few years of the foregoing arrangement, through the competition of the middlemen, *ib.* 1462–1471——Reasonable adjustment of prices by the arrangement in question, *ib.* 1469——Clear illustration of the working of the net system and of the gross system in the paper before delivered in, *ib,* 1606.

As journeyman and as frame-owner witness has had experience of the net system of wages, and testifies strongly in its favour, *J. Elliott* 1665, 1666——How far since the date of witness's inquiry (1844) the net system has become a new feature in the trade, *Muggeridge* 2715–2719——After nine years experience of the net system witness feels confident of its value, *Richmond* 5515–5517——Great satisfaction experienced by witness when working some time since for Mr. Cummings on the factory or net system, under which he knew what his earnings were, and that he was not subject to be "docked" by middlemen, *Greaves* 8165. 8333–8338——Other employment obtained by witness and some fellow-workmen when Mr. Cummings could not find them work, through slackness in his trade, *ib.* 8166. 8169–8180. 8277–8299——Advantages attributed to the net system, as adopted by a silk glove manufacturer in Nottingham ; satisfaction of the men with such system, *ib.* 9622–9628. 9752–9757.

3. *Arguments opposed to the adoption of a Net or Poundage System:*

Objections to Mr. Collins's so called net system as being in reality a rent system, much worse than the present system, *Walker* 2170–2175——Absence of security for a proper return for the use of the frame, under a net system, *Walker* 2204. 2214–2220. 2309–2313; *Baines* 2517; *Corah* 3510; *Billson* 4128. 4232; *Loveday* 4312–4317; *Hackett* 4585–4589; *Payne* 6007–6009; *Ratcliffe* 6199–6201; *Turner* 6474; *M'Callum* 9818–9820 ——Impracticability of so calculating the rent and charges as to substitute for them one uniform net system applicable alike to all workmen, *Walker* 2286–2288——The depressed operatives would be no better off if frame rents were abolished, *ib.* 2318, 2319. 2374—— Facility at present for the adoption of the net system, *Walker* 2339–2341 ; *Ratcliffe* 6341 ——Belief that the net system would not be beneficial either to the employer or employed, *Walker* 2342.

Inexpediency of the compulsory abolition of the rent and charges system, *Baines* 2460. 2462. 2474–2476. 2483–2486. 2521–2532. 2541–2558; *Allen* 6958–6962. 7009–7014; *Heard* 7150–7153. 7166–7169. 7184–7192; *Street* 7316–7324. 7331–7333; *B. Elliott* 7632; *M'Callum* 9944–9950——Statement that the net system has not been adopted in regard to the work outside the factory for Mr. Biggs, inasmuch as the middlemen who pay him poundage still take frame rent from the workmen, *Corah* 3273–3281. 3305——The net system is not adopted anywhere outside the factories, *ib.* 3281, 3282——Sundry reasons assigned for the conclusion that the net system cannot be adopted generally, nor the rent system abolished, *ib.* 3283–3306. 3316–3319. 3354——Under a net system idle or irregular workmen would prevent the manufacturer from getting a due return on his frames, *ib.* 3302–3304.

Impracticability of large manufacturers adopting a net system of wages on account of the immense confusion that would ensue, *Corah* 3510–3512. 3613——Belief that the majority of the workmen are opposed to net wages, *Corah* 3510; *Billson* 4078–4081. 4257——Proportionate reduction in wages if frame rent be abolished, *Corah* 3510. 3611, 3612; *Billson* 4174–4178——Courses which the hosier might adopt in order to obtain a return for his machinery if frame rents were abolished by Act; disadvantage to the workmen under such courses as compared with the present system, *Corah* 3510–3524. 3611–3618.

A net system would be beneficial to the idle and incompetent, but injurious to the industrious and skilful, *Corah* 3510; *Billson* 4178; *Loveday* 4294, 4295. 4492–4498; *Hackett* 4562, 4563; *Turner* 6470–6473; *Morley* 6558. 6722, 6723. 6853. 6892–6899;

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Allen 6960; *Freer* 9094–9108; *Sanderson* 9329–9333——No advantage to factory operatives if the net system were adopted generally, *Billson* 4256——Admission by Messrs. Buckby and Elliott that if a net system were adopted there would be a proportionate reduction of wages, *Loveday* 4296–4307; 4349–4353——Respects in which witness objects to a net system, *Hackett* 4562, 4563. 4582–4590. 4601, 4602.

Grounds for the opinion that the abolition of rent and charges by Act of Parliament would be an injury rather than a benefit to the workmen, and that their wages would, if anything, be lowered thereby, *Payne* 5800–5806. 5827–5829. 6006–6010; *Allen* 6958–6961. 7009–7012; *Heard* 7150, 7151. 7167–7169. 7193–7204; *Freer* 9037–9045. 9084–9108. 9150–9152; *Stafford* 9388–9397. 9418–9420——The abolition of frame rent would not prevent the men from offering to work at reduced wages in slack seasons, *Ratcliffe* 6193——Injury to the trade and to the workmen if frame rent, &c., were abolished, *ib.* 6243, 6244. 6270——Witness's hands (150 in number) are all opposed to the net system, *Turner* 6466–6469.

Impracticability of a net scale of payment, *Street* 7251——Great confusion as regards prices under a net system, *Street* 7316. 7322, 7323; *Sanderson* 9336–9339——Doubt as to the adoption of a system of net wages being an advantage to the workman, *Nicholson* 8743, 8744. 8873–8880; *Sanderson* 9268–9274. 9282–9285. 9329–9339——Different feeling of workmen in regard to net wages, *Nicholson* 8744. 8873–8877——Opportunity to employers to reduce prices or wages under a net system, *Sanderson* 9282–9295.

See also *Agitation and Complaint.* *Competition.* *Domestic Manufacture.* *Education.* *Employment*, 2. *Factories.* *Frame Rents*, II. III. IV. *Imposition* (*Use of Frames*). *Independent Frames*, 4. *Kibworth* (*Leicester*). *Legislative Interference.* *Middlemen*, 6. *Petitions.* *Poundage System.* *Preston, W. & Co.* *Relations between Employer and Employed.* *Slow Hands.* *Strikes.* *Universal Anti-Truck Society.* *Unskilled Labour.* *Variation in Prices.* *Workmen.*

New Frames. See *Narrow Frames.*

Newstead, Thomas. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Framework-knitter at Leicester; works for Messrs. Rawston & Donisthorpe, 5520–5522——Formerly worked for about four months for Mr. Corah, 5523, 5524——General rent of 1 *s.* a week for narrow frames, 5525–5527——Charges over and above that of the frame rent, 5528–5532——As a general rule full rent is charged for short work, 5533–5535. 5590–5593. 5731——It is also charged as a rule in cases of sickness, 5536–5538——Witness has rarely had short work, and has never been charged full rent in such cases, 5539, 5540. 5730–5734.

Statement in detail to the effect that Mr. Corah took 4 *s.* rent upon an occasion of witness being sick for five weeks, and unable to work, Mr. Corah moreover being made cognizant of the fact, 5541–5563. 5585–5589. 5612–5624——Total payments to the amount of 4 *s.* 3 *d.* from 10 *s.* 3 *d.*, as earned by witness in two weeks, 5564–5583. 5606–5611——Witness has often heard complaints by Mr. Corah's workpeople as to his taking rent for short work and in cases of sickness, 5558. 5594–5597——Complaints made against the system of rent and charges generally, 5590–5593.

Definition of the term "stint," 5603–5605——Different descriptions of work, and different rates of wages in the trade in 1816 and in 1855; very much lower wages at the present time, 5625–5628. 5632–5648. 5660–5694——The charges are much the same as in 1816; 5629, 5630——Increase since 1816 in the rent for coarse gauge frames, 5629. 5631——Grounds upon which the Leicester operatives think they would be better off if rent and charges were abolished, 5649–5659——Average weekly earnings at present of from 6 *s.* to 7 *s.* at narrow frames, 5653. 5684, 5685. 5691–5693.

Dissatisfaction from the workmen not knowing at the beginning of the week what their earnings may be, 5654–5659——Practice generally of middlemen to deduct full charges without reference to the amount of work, 5657–5659. 5718–5720. 5727–5729——Doubt as to the accuracy of statements by Mr. Loveday concerning the rate of wages, 5675–5694——Improvement if middlemen were done away with altogether, or were paid directly by the manufacturer, which would be quite feasible, 5695–5721——Necessary submission by the workmen to impositions by the middlemen, 5714–5721.

Tendency of a net system to increase the operatives' earnings, 5722, 5723——Advantage if children could be educated, instead of being placed at the winding wheel, 5724——Under a net system families would earn as much without the children being employed, 5725——Better understanding between employer and employed under a net system, 5726——Failure of eye-sight in the hosiery trade adverted to, 5735–5737——Equal security under a net system as at present against the frames being used improperly, 5738–5748——Imposition now practised by some middlemen upon the manufacturers in regard to the use of their frames and the appropriation of the rent, 5742–5748.

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Nicholson, Edward. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Framework-knitter under Mr. Corah, of Leicester, 8685–8687——Appears before the Committee perfectly unfettered as to his evidence, 8688–8699——Has worked for Mr. Corah between fifteen and sixteen years, 8700——Was ill last Christmas for seven weeks, whereupon the frame rent for that period was not charged by Mr. Corah, 8701–8719——Cannot speak to the general practice of Mr. Corah as regards frame rent during sickness; he did not calculate upon allowance of the rent in his own case, 8712–8718. 8745–8750.

Weekly net earnings by witness of 4 *s.* 3 *d.* at a narrow frame, he being sixty-nine years old, 8720–8733——Decreased earnings at narrow frames since the introduction of improved machinery, 8734, 8735. 8757, 8758——Belief as to its being the general practice of Mr. Corah to give out full work, 8737–8740. 8825–8828——Objection to the principle of legislative interference between masters and men, the latter moreover not being in a position to enforce the proper working of an Act of Parliament, 8741, 8742. 8752–8756. 8774–8777. 8881–8884.

Doubt as to the adoption of a system of net wages being an advantage to the workmen, 8743, 8744. 8873–8880——Different feeling of workmen in regard to net wages, 8744. 8873–8877——Very low earnings under the present system adverted to as naturally creating dissatisfaction, 8757–8759. 8765–8776. 8783. 8802–8804——Witness has always worked direct to the warehouse, which he considers a decided advantage, 8760–8779. 8822–8824——Obstacles to the abolition of the services of the middlemen, 8778–8783. 8812–8818——The over supply of labour, and not the practice of manufacturers, is the cause of low wages and depression, 8784–8786.

Exaggeration of statements as to framework-knitters generally making holiday on Mondays and Tuesdays, 8787–8793——Reference to the retirement from business of Mr. Sporritt on account of the competition of the frame rent system, 8794–8801. 8833–8836——Better earnings of witness's children than if they were engaged in framework-knitting, 8802–8808——Great change of later years in the character of the hose made on narrow frames, 8809–8811——More independent frames held by operatives fifty years ago than at present, 8837, 8838——Operation of frame clubs in former years, 8839–8844——Advantage to workmen in brisk times if they had frames of their own, 8845——Reasons for independent frames having gone out of the workmen's possession, 8845–8855.

The frame rent was not a grievance fifty years ago, but the rent has been increased since then, 8856–8858——Arrangement in 1825 for increasing both frame rent and prices; in the meantime wages or prices have fallen, but the rent has continued at the advance, 8859–8869——Corresponding reduction of wages if the middleman were paid by the manufacturer, 8870–8878——Apprehended increase of ill-feeling between employer and employed if the proposed Act of Parliament be carried out, 8882, 8883.

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Invariable rent in Nottingham of 9 *d.* a week for frames under thirty gauge, and of 1 *s.* a week for thirty gauge frames and upwards, *Morley* 6515–6519. 6574–6576. 6711–6714; *Allen* 6936–6938. 6941; *Street* 7238–7242——Belief that the rule in Nottingham in the case of all respectable hosiers is not to take full rent in case of sickness or of short work, *Morley* 6565. 6598–6601. 6664–6668. 6683–6688. 6770–6775——Absence generally of complaint by the workmen against the Nottingham manufacturers for short work, &c., *Allen* 6957. 7052——Comparatively small amount of pauperism in Nottinghamshire, *ib.* 7053, 7054——Quality of the Nottingham hose manufacture, *Heard* 7170–7183.

Prejudicial operation of the rent and charges system in Nottingham at the present time, full rent and charges being frequently deducted by middlemen in cases of short work and of sickness; instance in illustration, *Mason* 9595, 9596. 9598–9616. 9621, 9622. 9665–9673——Slackness of trade and want of employment in Nottingham of late years and at the present time, more especially in the silk branch, *ib.* 9638–9642. 9680, 9681. 9706–9709. 9754——There are a great many frames in the town of Nottingham, *ib.* 9711–9713——Reasons why witness considers that the operatives in the villages round Nottingham are better off than those in the town, *ib.* 9720, 9721——Scarcity of employment in Nottingham at the present time, *ib.* 9777, 9778.

See also *Agitation and Complaint. Carver & Son. Condition of Workmen. Custom. Frame Rents. Legislative Interference. Middlemen. Net Wages. Rent and Charges. Short Work or Stints. Sickness. Wages or Earnings. Warehouse Prices. Workmen. Wrought Hose.*

Nottinghamshire Hosiers. Exceptions taken to some of the objections urged by the hosiers of Nottinghamshire against the proposed legislation for the abolition of stoppages, *Muggeridge* 2834–2844. 2852——These objections placed before the Committee, *App. p.* 583, 584.

Number of Frames. There are in the United Kingdom about 10,000 wide frames and 30,000 narrow frames available, *Biggs* 457. 471——Superabundance of machinery, which prevents manufacturers increasing the number of their frames, *Cummings* 927, 928——Gradual decrease in the number of narrow frames, *Freer* 9206, 9207.

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Operatives. See *Workmen.*

Oppression. Statement by Mr. Muggeridge, the Commissioner in 1844, as to the oppression under the frame rent system, *Biggs* 620——Improper and oppressive practices under the rent system, which induced witness to abandon it, *Cummings* 843–845, 867–878——Extract from the report of witness with respect to the alleged oppression of the frame rent system, *Muggeridge* 2576——Mode of conduct of the inquiry in the case of witnesses who deposed to oppressive conduct on the part of manufacturers, *ib.* 2720–2722.

Designation of the frame rent system as an oppression, *Winters* 5085, 5086. 5102——The charges are often more oppressive than the frame rent, *Richmond* 5285——Argument that it is a hardship and a fraud if men, paying 1 *s.* a week for the use of a frame, are not enabled to make full use of such frame, *ib.* 5397–5432——Oppression in insisting on full charges if a man has not an opportunity of earning full wages, *Stone* 6100.

How far expedient to legislate, in order to prevent oppression by any manufacturers who may be inclined to oppress, *Ratcliffe* 6350–6354——Instances have constantly been brought before witness of oppression in the deduction of frame rent and charges; case in illustration, *Briggs* 8344–8358——Oppression in slack times, but not when work is plenty, *ib.* 8583. 8590.

Sundry papers delivered in by Mr. Buckby and Mr. Elliott as showing the hardships of the present system, *App. p.* 567, *et seq.*

See also *Frame Rents. Middlemen. Rent and Charges*, 2. *Short Work or Stints. Sickness.*

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Parliamentary Interference. See *Legislative Interference.*

Parochial Relief. See *Poor Law Relief.*

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Payne, Thomas. (Analysis of his Evidence.)—Manufacturer at Hinckley, 5479–5752——Owns about 100 frames; employs also about twenty independent frames, 5753–5758——Very irregular and short attendance at a shop belonging to witness, in which he had several circular frames, 5759–5782——Better earnings of framework-knitters if they worked as long as operatives in Lancashire, &c., 5783–5789——Statement showing the gross and net earnings of forty of witness's hands over a period of twelve weeks, 5790–5799.

Tendency of a net system to reduce earnings; grounds for this statement, 5800–5806. 5827–5829. 6006. 6010——Less continuous employment under a net system, 5803–5806. 6010——Inexpediency of the middlemen being paid by the manufacturers, 5807–5811. 5824–5826——Reasons assigned as producing depression and distress at Hinckley, the system of rent and charges having nothing to do with it, 5812–5823. 5831–5846. 5861.

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Short Work, or Stints:

1. *Inducement under the Rent System to spread out the Work; how far an evil to the Workman.*
2. *Frequency of the Practice of spreading out the Work, and of charging Full Rent for Short Work.*
3. *Denial by Manufacturers, &c. that they take Full Rent for Short Work, or Stint the Work for the sake of the Rent.*

1. *Inducement under the Rent System to spread out the Work; how far an evil to the Workman:*

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1. *Inducement under the Rent System to spread out the Work, &c.*—continued.

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2. *Frequency of the Practice of spreading out the Work, and of charging Full Rent for that Work:*

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2. *Frequency of the Practice of spreading out the Work, &c.*—continued.

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3. *Denial by Manufacturers, &c. that they take Full Rent for Short Work, or stint the Work for the sake of the Rent:*

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Witness as middleman never takes full rent when he gives out short work, *Loveday* 4290-4292. 4435-4440. 4446——In case of short work which witness may spread over all the frames, he gets a deduction of rent paid by him for the manufacturers' frames, *ib.* 4442-4449——Reference to the statements of Messrs. Buckby and Elliott in regard to full rent and short work, as having referred to very extreme cases, *ib.* 4550-4553——With regard to the alleged practice of "stints," witness does not believe that the men would submit to it, *Hackett* 4566-4571——Deduction by witness from the rent in case of short work, *ib.* 4566. 4571, 4572; *Ratcliffe* 6169, 6170. 6267.

Witness has rarely had short work, and has never been charged full rent in such case, *Newstead* 5539, 5540. 5730-5734——Inaccuracy of evidence by Sketchley (*Q.* 3771 *et seq.*) as to deductions by witness coupled with the issue of short materials; earnings of the man Dexter referred to in explanation, *Payne* 5897-5915——Invariable practice of witness to give out materials for full work, *ib.* 5918-5922. 5925, 5926; *Allen* 6950-6952.

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3. *Denial by Manufacturers, &c. that they take Full Rent, &c.*—continued.

6952. 7052; *Heard* 7090–7092; *B. Elliott* 8008, 8009——Witness has no knowledge of full rent being systematically charged for short work, as stated before the Commissioner in 1844, *Ratcliffe* 6330, 6331.

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See also *Agitation and Complaint. Allen, Edward. Collard, Mr. Derby. Earl Shilton. Frame Rent. Hinckley,* 1. *Holidays. Legislative Interference. Loughborough. Net Wages. Oppression. Rent and Charges. Sapcote. Sickness.*

Sickness:

1. *Frequency of the Practice of charging Full Frame Rent during Sickness.*
2. *Denial that in Cases of Sickness there is no Deduction from the Rent.*

1. *Frequency of the Practice of charging Full Frame Rent during Sickness:*

Practice generally of charging the full weekly rent, though the workmen be disabled by sickness, *Mitchell* 34. 69. 91–93. 194–196; *Buckby* 1433; *Newstead* 5536–5538—— The Commission of 1844 proves that full rent is taken in case of sickness, *Biggs* 400—— Witness mentions several instances in which workmen in Leicester, disabled by sickness, have been obliged to pay full rent and charges; he is prepared to mention their names if required, *J. Elliott* 1680–1701——Instance of a man who was sick for seven weeks, and then at work for two weeks, having been charged nine weeks' rent, *ib.* 1681–1683—— Exceptions to the practice of deductions in case of sickness; the rule, however, being to make the stoppage, *ib.* 1696. 1698. 1702–1705——Deductions during sickness should be disallowed by law, *ib.* 1706.

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Striped Hose. Statement as to the narrow frames being required to make the stripe in stockings, the wide frames in factories not being available for the purpose, *Corah* 3259. 3264. 3345-3362——Proportion of the hose made in narrow frames which contains the stripe, *ib.* 3348-3362.

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A middleman in hiring a frame at 6 *d.* a week, does so on the risk of not being able to sub-let it regularly, *Walker* 2271——As regards frames hired at 6 *d.* and let at 1 *s.*, the workmen would not derive any benefit if the rent were abolished, *Baines* 2504-2514. 2527-2532. 2547-2557——To hire frames at 6 *d.* and let them at 1 *s.* is not a frequent practice, *ib.* 2506. 2519, 2520. 2528.

Exorbitant rent deducted from the workmen in the case of independent frames, sub-let to the manufacturer or middleman, *Muggeridge* 2746-2761. 2820-2826——Belief that but very few independent frames are hired by middlemen and sub-let to workmen, *Billson* 4114-4119; *Ratcliffe* 6373. 6375-6377——Legitimate profit of hosiers in undertaking hired frames at an advanced price, *Allen* 7063-7068.

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Sutton. Statement as to the average wages under middlemen at Sutton, *M'Callum* 9836——Satisfactory system pursued by all Messrs. Ward's middlemen in Sutton, &c. as to charges and prices, *ib.* 9862–9865——Absence of agitation in Sutton against rent and charges, *ib.* 9866–9870——Feeling of some of the operatives that they would be worse off under a net system, *ib.* 9870, 9871.

Sutton, Thomas. Statement of Mr. Thomas Sutton, middleman under witness, that he never charges full rent for short work, *Walker* 2128.

Net earnings for 14 weeks of workmen under Mr. Sutton, with the rent and charges and kind of work, *App. p.* 575——Statement showing the gross and net earnings of thirty-four persons at Mr. Sutton's, for the week ending 19 May 1855, *ib.* 596.

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Thorpe, —— (*Wooloy*). Stoppage of four weeks' frame rent during the illness of this operative, *Sketchley* 3751, 3752.

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Towns. One effect of the abolition of frame rents would be to throw the people upon the towns, *Biggs* 796, 797.——*See* also *Factories.*

Truck. Considerable extent to which at present the truck system, or the payment of wages in provisions, is enforced in witness's district (Earl Shilton, &c.), *Abbott* 1953-1963. 2005, 2006——Practice of payment of wages in provisions adverted to by witness in his report in 1844, *Muggeridge* 2573——Belief as to wages being still paid in some instances in goods, *ib.* 2635, 2636——Witness, as Commissioner, did not consider the rent system a species of truck, *ib.* 2640-2642——Similar objection which may be made to the rent system as to the truck system, *ib.* 2681-2684.

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Turner, Mr. Earnings of the wrought-hose hands employed through Mr. Turner, *Corah* 2923-2946——Straightforward manner in which Mr. Turner acts as middleman, *Bray* 9540. 9543-9552——Statement by Mr. Turner of the earnings of wrought-hose hands employed through him for Mr. Corah, with particulars as to the deductions, *App. p.* 585-588.——*See* also *Sapcote.*

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